TRILBY

Cu Maurier

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TRILBY

TRILBY

BY

GEORGE DU MAURIER

AUTHOR OF 'PETER IBBETSON'

'Hélas! je sais un chant d'amour
Triste et gai tour à tour!'

IN THREE VOLS.

VOL. I

LONDON

OSGOOD, McILVAINE & CO.

45 ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1894

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TRILBY

PART FIRST

'Mimi Pinson est une blonde,
Une blonde que l'on connait ;
Elle n'a qu'une robe au monde,
Landérirette ! et qu'un bonnet !'

It was a fine, sunny, showery day in April.

The big studio window was open at the top, and let in a pleasant breeze from the north-west. Things were beginning to look shipshape at last. The big piano, a semi-grand by Broadwood, had arrived from England by 'the Little Quickness' (*la Petite Vitesse*, as the goods trains are called

in France), and lay, freshly tuned, alongside the eastern wall; on the wall opposite was a panoply of foils, masks, and boxing-gloves.

A trapeze, a knotted rope, and two parallel cords, supporting each a ring, depended from a huge beam in the ceiling. The walls were of the usual dull red, relieved by plaster casts of arms and legs and hands and feet; and Dante's mask, and Michael Angelo's alto-rilievo of Leda and the swan, and a centaur and Lapith from the Elgin Marbles—on none of these had the dust as yet had time to settle.

There were also studies in oil from the nude; copies of Titian, Rembrandt, Velasquez, Rubens, Tintoret, Leonardo da Vinci —none of the school of Botticelli, Mantegna, and Co.—a firm whose merits had not as yet been revealed to the many.

Along the walls, at a great height, ran a broad shelf, on which were other casts in plaster, terra-cotta, imitation bronze: a little

Theseus, a little Venus of Milo, a little discobolus; a little flayed man threatening high heaven (an act that seemed almost pardonable under the circumstances!); a lion and a boar by Barye; an anatomical figure of a horse, with only one leg left and no ears; a horse's head from the pediment of the Parthenon, earless also; and the bust of Clytie, with her beautiful low brow, her sweet wan gaze, and the ineffable forward shrug of her dear shoulders that makes her bosom as a nest, a rest, a pillow, a refuge—the likeness of a thing to be loved and desired for ever, and sought for and wrought for and fought for by generation after generation of the sons of men.

Near the stove hung a gridiron, a frying-pan, a toasting-fork, and a pair of bellows. In an adjoining glazed corner cupboard were plates and glasses, black-handled knives, pewter spoons, and three-pronged steel forks;

a salad-bowl, vinegar cruets, an oil-flask, two mustard-pots (English and French), and such like things—all scrupulously clean. On the floor, which had been stained and waxed at considerable cost, lay two cheetah-skins and a large Persian praying-rug. One half of it, however (under the trapeze and at the end farthest from the window, beyond the model-throne), was covered with coarse matting, that one might fence or box without slipping down and splitting one's self in two, or fall without breaking any bones.

Two other windows of the usual French size and pattern, with shutters to them and heavy curtains of baize, opened east and west, to let in dawn or sunset, as the case might be, or haply keep them out. And there were alcoves, recesses, irregularities, odd little nooks and corners, to be filled up as time wore on with endless personal nick-nacks, bibelots, private properties and acqui-

sitions—things that make a place genial, homelike, and good to remember, and sweet to muse upon (with fond regret) in after years.

And an immense divan spread itself in width and length and delightful thickness just beneath the big north window, the business window—a divan so immense that three well-fed, well-contented Englishmen could all lie lazily smoking their pipes on it at once without being in each other's way, and very often did!

At present one of these Englishmen—a Yorkshireman, by the way, called Taffy (and also the Man of Blood, because he was supposed to be distantly related to a baronet)—was more energetically engaged. Bare-armed, and in his shirt and trousers, he was twirling a pair of Indian clubs round his head. His face was flushed, and he was perspiring freely and looked fierce. He was a very big young man, fair, with kind but

choleric blue eyes, and the muscles of his brawny arm were strong as iron bands.

For three years he had borne Her Majesty's commission, and had been through the Crimean campaign without a scratch. He would have been one of the famous six hundred in the famous charge at Balaklava but for a sprained ankle (caught playing leap-frog in the trenches), which kept him in hospital on that momentous day. So that he lost his chance of glory or the grave, and this humiliating misadventure had sickened him of soldiering for life, and he never quite got over it. Then, feeling within himself an irresistible vocation for art, he had sold out; and here he was in Paris, hard at work, as we see.

He was good-looking, with straight features; but I regret to say that, besides his heavy plunger's moustache, he wore an immense pair of drooping auburn whiskers, of

the kind that used to be called Piccadilly weepers, and were afterwards affected by Mr. Sothern in Lord Dundreary. It was a fashion to do so then for such of our gilded youth as could afford the time (and the hair); the bigger and fairer the whiskers, the more beautiful was thought the youth! It seems incredible in these days, when even Her Majesty's Household Brigade go about with smooth cheeks and lips, like priests or play-actors.

'What's become of all the gold
Used to hang and brush their bosoms . . . ?'

Another inmate of this blissful abode—Sandy, the Laird of Cockpen, as he was called—sat in similarly simple attire at his easel, painting at a lifelike little picture of a Spanish toreador serenading a lady of high degree (in broad daylight). He had never been to Spain, but he had a complete toreador's kit—a bargain which he had

picked up for a mere song in the Boulevard du Temple—and he had hired the guitar. His pipe was in his mouth—reversed; for it had gone out, and the ashes were spilled all over his trousers, where holes were often burned in this way.

Quite gratuitously, and with a pleasing Scotch accent, he began to declaim:

'A street there is in Paris famous
For which no rhyme our language yields;
Roo Nerve day Petty Shong its name is—
The New Street of the Little Fields. . . .'

And then, in his keen appreciation of the immortal stanza, he chuckled audibly, with a face so blithe and merry and well pleased that it did one good to look at him.

He also had entered life by another door. His parents (good, pious people in Dundee) had intended that he should be a writer to the signet, as his father and grandfather had been before him. And here he was in Paris

famous, painting toreadors, and spouting the 'Ballad of the Bouillabaisse,' as he would often do out of sheer lightness of heart—much oftener, indeed, than he would say his prayers.

Kneeling on the divan, with his elbow on the window-sill, was a third and much younger youth. The third he was 'Little Billee.' He had pulled down the green baize blind, and was looking over the roofs and chimney-pots of Paris and all about with all his eyes, munching the while a roll and a savoury saveloy, in which there was evidence of much garlic. He ate with great relish, for he was very hungry; he had been all the morning at Carrel's studio, drawing from the life.

Little Billee was small and slender, about twenty or twenty-one, and had a straight white forehead veined with blue, large dark blue eyes, delicate, regular features, and coal-

black hair. He was also very graceful and well built, with very small hands and feet, and much better dressed than his friends, who went out of their way to outdo the denizens of the Quartier Latin in careless eccentricity of garb, and succeeded. And in his winning and handsome face there was just a faint suggestion of some possible very remote Jewish ancestor—just a tinge of that strong, sturdy, irrepressible, indomitable, indelible blood which is of such priceless value in diluted homœopathic doses, like the dry white Spanish wine called montijo, which is not meant to be taken pure; but without a judicious admixture of which no sherry can go round the world and keep its flavour intact; or like the famous bulldog strain, which is not beautiful in itself, and yet just for lacking a little of the same no greyhound can ever hope to be a champion. So, at least, I have been told by wine merchants

and dog-fanciers—the most veracious persons that can be. Fortunately for the world, and especially for ourselves, most of us have in our veins at least a minim of that precious fluid, whether we know it or show it or not. *Tant pis pour les autres!*

As Little Billee munched he also gazed at the busy place below—the Place St. Anatole des Arts—at the old houses opposite, some of which were being pulled down, no doubt lest they should fall of their own sweet will. In the gaps between he would see discoloured, old, cracked, dingy walls, with mysterious windows and rusty iron balconies of great antiquity—sights that set him dreaming dreams of mediæval French love and wickedness and crime, bygone mysteries of Paris!

One gap went right through the block, and gave him a glimpse of the river, the 'Cité,' and the ominous old Morgue; a little

to the right rose the gray towers of Notre Dame de Paris into the checkered April sky. Indeed, the top of nearly all Paris lay before him, with a little stretch of the imagination on his part; and he gazed with a sense of novelty, an interest and a pleasure for which he could not have found any expression in mere language.

Paris! Paris!! Paris!!!

The very name had always been one to conjure with, whether he thought of it as a mere sound on the lips and in the ear, or as a magical written or printed word for the eye. And here was the thing itself at last, and he, he himself, *ipsissimus*, in the very heart of it, to live there and learn there as long as he liked, and make himself the great artist he longed to be.

Then, his meal finished, he lit a pipe, and flung himself on the divan and sighed deeply, out of the over-full contentment of his heart.

He felt he had never known happiness like this, never even dreamed its possibility. And yet his life had been a happy one. He was young and tender, was Little Billee; he had never been to any school, and was innocent of the world and its wicked ways; innocent of French especially, and the ways of Paris and its Latin Quarter. He had been brought up and educated at home, had spent his boyhood in London with his mother and sister, who now lived in Devonshire on somewhat straitened means. His father, who was dead, had been a clerk in the Treasury.

He and his two friends, Taffy and the Laird, had taken this studio together. The Laird slept there, in a small bedroom off the studio. Taffy had a bedroom at the Hôtel de Seine, in the street of that name. Little Billee lodged at the Hôtel Corneille, in the Place de l'Odéon.

He looked at his two friends, and won-

dered if any one, living or dead, had ever had such a glorious pair of chums as these.

Whatever they did, whatever they said, was simply perfect in his eyes; they were his guides and philosophers as well as his chums. On the other hand, Taffy and the Laird were as fond of the boy as they could be.

His absolute belief in all they said and did touched them none the less that they were conscious of its being somewhat in excess of their deserts. His almost girlish purity of mind amused and charmed them, and they did all they could to preserve it, even in the Quartier Latin, where purity is apt to go bad if it be kept too long.

They loved him for his affectionate disposition, his lively and caressing ways; and they admired him far more than he ever knew, for they recognised in him a quickness, a keenness, a delicacy of perception, in

matters of form and colour, a mysterious facility and felicity of execution, a sense of all that was sweet and beautiful in nature, and a ready power of expressing it, that had not been vouchsafed to them in any such generous profusion, and which, as they ungrudgingly admitted to themselves and each other, amounted to true genius.

And when one within the immediate circle of our intimates is gifted in this abnormal fashion, we either hate or love him for it, in proportion to the greatness of his gift; according to the way we are built.

So Taffy and the Laird loved Little Billee—loved him very much indeed. Not but what Little Billee had his faults. For instance, he didn't interest himself very warmly in other people's pictures. He didn't seem to care for the Laird's guitar-playing toreador, nor for his serenaded lady —at all events, he never said anything about

them, either in praise or blame. He looked at Taffy's realisms (for Taffy was a realist) in silence, and nothing tries true friendship so much as silence of this kind.

But, then, to make up for it, when they all three went to the Louvre, he didn't seem to trouble much about Titian either, or Rembrandt, or Velasquez, Rubens, Veronese, or Leonardo. He looked at the people who looked at the pictures, instead of at the pictures themselves; especially at the people who copied them, the sometimes charming young lady painters—and these seemed to him even more charming than they really were—and he looked a great deal out of the Louvre windows, where there was much to be seen: more Paris, for instance—Paris, of which he could never have enough.

But when, surfeited with classical beauty, they all three went and dined together, and Taffy and the Laird said beautiful things

about the old masters, and quarrelled about them, he listened with deference and rapt attention and reverentially agreed with all they said; and afterwards made the most delightfully funny little pen-and-ink sketches of them, saying all these beautiful things (which he sent to his mother and sister at home); so lifelike, so real, that you could almost hear the beautiful things they said; so beautifully drawn that you felt the old masters couldn't have drawn them better themselves; and so irresistibly droll that you felt that the old masters could not have drawn them at all—any more than Milton could have described the quarrel between Sairey Gamp and Betsy Prig; no one, in short, but Little Billee.

Little Billee took up the 'Ballad of the Bouillabaisse' where the Laird had left it off, and speculated on the future of himself and his friends, when he should have got to

forty years—an almost impossibly remote future.

These speculations were interrupted by a loud knock at the door, and two men came in.

First, a tall bony individual of any age between thirty and forty-five, of Jewish aspect, well-featured but sinister. He was very shabby and dirty, and wore a red *béret* and a large velveteen cloak, with a big metal clasp at the collar. His thick, heavy, languid, lustreless black hair fell down behind his ears on to his shoulders, in that musician-like way that is so offensive to the normal Englishman. He had bold, brilliant black eyes, with long heavy lids, a thin, sallow face, and a beard of burnt-up black, which grew almost from his under eyelids; and over it his moustache, a shade lighter, fell in two long spiral twists. He went by the name of Svengali, and spoke fluent French

with a German accent and humorous German twists and idioms, and his voice was very thin and mean and harsh, and often broke into a disagreeable falsetto.

His companion was a little swarthy young man—a gypsy, possibly—much pitted with the smallpox, and also very shabby. He had large, soft, affectionate brown eyes, like a King Charles spaniel. He had small, nervous, veiny hands, with nails bitten down to the quick, and carried a fiddle and a fiddlestick under his arm, without a case, as though he had been playing in the street.

'Ponchour, mes enfants,' said Svengali. 'Che vous amène mon ami Checko, qui choue du fiolon gomme un anche!'

Little Billee, who adored all 'sweet musicianers,' jumped up and made Gecko as warmly welcome as he could in his early French.

'Ha! le biâno!' exclaimed Svengali, flinging his red *béret* on it, and his cloak on the ground. 'Ch'espère qu'il est pon, et pien t'accord!'

And sitting down on the music-stool, he ran up and down the scales with that easy power, that smooth even crispness of touch, which reveal the master.

Then he fell to playing Chopin's impromptu in A flat, so beautifully that Little Billee's heart went nigh to bursting with suppressed emotion and delight. He had never heard any music of Chopin's before, nothing but British provincial home-made music — melodies with variations, 'Annie Laurie,' 'The Last Rose of Summer,' 'The Blue Bells of Scotland'; innocent little motherly and sisterly tinklings, invented to set the company at their ease on festive evenings, and make all-round conversation possible for shy people, who fear the un-

accompanied sound of their own voices, and whose genial chatter always leaves off directly the music ceases.

He never forgot that impromptu, which he was destined to hear again one day in strange circumstances.

Then Svengali and Gecko made music together, divinely. Little fragmentary things, sometimes consisting of but a few bars, but these bars of *such* beauty and meaning! Scraps, snatches, short melodies, meant to fetch, to charm immediately, or to melt or sadden or madden just for a moment, and that knew just when to leave off—czardas, gypsy dances, Hungarian love-plaints, things little known out of eastern Europe in the fifties of this century, till the Laird and Taffy were almost as wild in their enthusiasm as Little Billee—a silent enthusiasm too deep for speech. And when these two great artists left off to smoke, the three

Britishers were too much moved even for that, and there was a stillness. . . .

Suddenly there came a loud knuckle-rapping at the outer door, and a portentous voice of great volume, and that might almost have belonged to any sex (even an angel's), uttered the British milkman's yodel, 'Milk below!' and before any one could say 'Entrez,' a strange figure appeared, framed by the gloom of the little antechamber.

It was the figure of a very tall and fully-developed young female, clad in the gray overcoat of a French infantry soldier, continued netherwards by a short striped petticoat, beneath which were visible her bare white ankles and insteps, and slim, straight, rosy heels, clean cut and smooth as the back of a razor; her toes lost themselves in a huge pair of male slippers, which made her drag her feet as she walked.

She bore herself with easy, unembarrassed grace, like a person whose nerves and muscles are well in tune, whose spirits are high, who has lived much in the atmosphere of French studios, and feels at home in it.

This strange medley of garments was surmounted by a small bare head with short, thick, wavy brown hair, and a very healthy young face, which could scarcely be called quite beautiful at first sight, since the eyes were too wide apart, the mouth too large, the chin too massive, the complexion a mass of freckles. Besides, you can never tell how beautiful (or how ugly) a face may be till you have tried to draw it.

But a small portion of her neck, down by the collar-bone, which just showed itself between the unbuttoned lapels of her military coat collar, was of a delicate privet-like whiteness that is never to be found on any French neck, and very few English ones. Also,

she had a very fine brow, broad and low, with thick level eyebrows much darker than her hair, a broad, bony, high bridge to her short nose, and her full, broad cheeks were beautifully modelled. She would have made a singularly handsome boy.

As the creature looked round at the assembled company and flashed her big white teeth at them in an all-embracing smile of uncommon width and quite irresistible sweetness, simplicity, and friendly trust, one saw at a glance that she was out of the common clever, simple, humorous, honest, brave, and kind, and accustomed to be genially welcomed wherever she went. Then suddenly closing the door behind her, dropping her smile, and looking wistful and sweet, with her head on one side and her arms akimbo, 'Ye're all English, now, aren't ye?' she exclaimed. 'I heard the music, and thought I'd just come in for a bit, and pass

the time of day: you don't mind? Trilby, that's my name—Trilby O'Ferrall.'

She said this in English, with an accent half Scotch and certain French intonations, and in a voice so rich and deep and full as almost to suggest an incipient *tenore robusto;* and one felt instinctively that it was a real pity she wasn't a boy, she would have made such a jolly one.

'We're delighted, on the contrary,' said Little Billee, and advanced a chair for her.

But she said, 'Oh, don't mind me; go on with the music,' and sat herself down cross-legged on the model-throne near the piano.

As they still looked at her, curious and half embarrassed, she pulled a paper parcel containing food out of one of the coat-pockets, and exclaimed:

'I'll just take a bite, if you don't object; I'm a model, you know, and it's just rung

twelve—"the rest." I'm posing for Durien the sculptor, on the next floor. I pose to him for the altogether.'

'The altogether?' asked Little Billee.

'Yes—*l'ensemble*, you know—head, hands, and feet—everything—especially feet. That's my foot,' she said, kicking off her big slipper and stretching out the limb. 'It's the handsomest foot in all Paris. There's only one in all Paris to match it, and here it is,' and she laughed heartily (like a merry peal of bells), and stuck out the other.

And in truth they were astonishingly beautiful feet, such as one only sees in pictures and statues—a true inspiration of shape and colour, all made up of delicate lengths and subtly-modulated curves and noble straightnesses and happy little dimpled arrangements in innocent young pink and white.

So that Little Billee, who had the quick,

prehensile, æsthetic eye, and knew by the grace of Heaven what the shapes and sizes and colours of almost every bit of man, woman, or child should be (and so seldom are), was quite bewildered to find that a real, bare, live human foot could be such a charming object to look at, and felt that such a base or pedestal lent quite an antique and Olympian dignity to a figure that seemed just then rather grotesque in its mixed attire of military overcoat and female petticoat, and nothing else!

Poor Trilby!

The shape of those lovely slender feet (that were neither large nor small), facsimiled in dusty pale plaster of Paris, survives on the shelves and walls of many a studio throughout the world, and many a sculptor yet unborn has yet to marvel at their strange perfection, in studious despair.

For when Dame Nature takes it into

her head to do her very best, and bestow her minutest attention on a mere detail, as happens now and then — once in a blue moon, perhaps—she makes it uphill work for poor human art to keep pace with her.

It is a wondrous thing, the human foot —like the human hand; even more so, perhaps; but, unlike the hand, with which we are so familiar, it is seldom a thing of beauty in civilised adults who go about in leather boots or shoes.

So that it is hidden away in disgrace, a thing to be thrust out of sight and forgotten. It can sometimes be very ugly indeed—the ugliest thing there is, even in the fairest and highest and most gifted of her sex; and then it is of an ugliness to chill and kill romance, and scatter love's young dream, and almost break the heart.

And all for the sake of a high heel and

a ridiculously-pointed toe—mean things, at the best!

Conversely, when Mother Nature has taken extra pains in the building of it, and proper care or happy chance has kept it free of lamentable deformations, indurations, and discolorations — all those grewsome boot-begotten abominations which have made it so generally unpopular—the sudden sight of it, uncovered, comes as a very rare and singularly pleasing surprise to the eye that has learned how to see!

Nothing else that Mother Nature has to show, not even the human face divine, has more subtle power to suggest high physical distinction, happy evolution, and supreme development; the lordship of man over beast, the lordship of man over man, the lordship of woman over all!

En voilà de l'éloquence—à propos de bottes!

Trilby had respected Mother Nature's special gift to herself — had never worn a leather boot or shoe, had always taken as much care of her feet as many a fine lady takes of her hands. It was her one coquetry, the only real vanity she had.

Gecko, his fiddle in one hand and his bow in the other, stared at her in open-mouthed admiration and delight, as she ate her sandwich of soldier's bread and *fromage à la crème* quite unconcerned.

When she had finished she licked the tips of her fingers clean of cheese, and produced a small tobacco-pouch from another military pocket, made herself a cigarette, and lit it and smoked it, inhaling the smoke in large whiffs, filling her lungs with it, and sending it back through her nostrils, with a look of great beatitude.

Svengali played Schubert's 'Rosemonde,'

and flashed a pair of languishing black eyes at her with intent to kill.

But she didn't even look his way. She looked at Little Billee, at big Taffy, at the Laird, at the casts and studies, at the sky, the chimney-pots over the way, the towers of Notre Dame, just visible from where she sat.

Only when he finished she exclaimed: 'Maïe, aïe! c'est rudement bien tapé, c'te musique-là! Seulement, c'est pas gai, vous savez! Comment q'ça s'appelle?'

'It is called the "Rosemonde" of Schubert, matemoiselle,' replied Svengali. (I will translate.)

'And what's that — Rosemonde?' said she.

'Rosemonde was a princess of Cyprus, matemoiselle, and Cyprus is an island.'

'Ah, and Schubert, then — where's that?'

'Schubert is not an island, matemoiselle. Schubert was a compatriot of mine, and made music, and played the piano, just like me.'

'Ah, Schubert was a *monsieur*, then. Don't know him; never heard his name.'

'That is a pity, matemoiselle. He had some talent. You like this better, perhaps,' and he strummed,

'Messieurs les étudiants,
Montez à la chaumière
Pour y danser le cancan,'

striking wrong notes, and banging out a bass in a different key—a hideously grotesque performance.

'Yes, I like that better. It's gayer, you know. Is that also composed by a compatriot of yours?' asked the lady.

'Heaven forbid, matemoiselle.'

And the laugh was against Svengali.

But the real fun of it all (if there was

any) lay in the fact that she was perfectly sincere.

'Are you fond of music?' asked Little Billee.

'Oh, ain't I just!' she replied. 'My father sang like a bird. He was a gentleman and a scholar, my father was. His name was Patrick Michael O'Ferrall, Fellow of Trinity, Cambridge. He used to sing "Ben Bolt." Do you know "Ben Bolt"?'

'Oh yes, I know it well,' said Little Billee. 'It's a very pretty song.'

'I can sing it,' said Miss O'Ferrall. 'Shall I?'

'Oh, certainly, if you will be so kind.'

Miss O'Ferrall threw away the end of her cigarette, put her hands on her knees as she sat cross-legged on the model-throne, and sticking her elbows well out, she looked up to the ceiling with a tender, sentimental smile, and sang the touching song,

'Oh, don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?
Sweet Alice, with hair so brown?' etc. etc.

As some things are too sad and too deep for tears, so some things are too grotesque and too funny for laughter. Of such a kind was Miss O'Ferrall's performance of 'Ben Bolt.'

From that capacious mouth and through that high-bridged bony nose there rolled a volume of breathy sound, not loud, but so immense that it seemed to come from all round, to be reverberated from every surface in the studio. She followed more or less the shape of the tune, going up when it rose and down when it fell, but with such immense intervals between the notes as were never dreamed of in any mortal melody. It was as though she could never once have deviated into tune, never once have hit upon a true note, even by a fluke—in fact, as though she were absolutely tone-deaf, and

without ear, although she stuck to the time correctly enough.

She finished her song amid an embarrassing silence. The audience didn't quite know whether it were meant for fun or seriously. One wondered if she were not paying out Svengali for his impertinent performance of 'Messieurs les étudiants.' If so, it was a capital piece of impromptu tit-for-tat admirably acted, and a very ugly gleam yellowed the tawny black of Svengali's big eyes. He was so fond of making fun of others that he particularly resented being made fun of himself—couldn't endure that any one should ever have the laugh of *him*.

At length Little Billee said: 'Thank you so much. It's a capital song.'

'Yes,' said Miss O'Ferrall. 'It's the only song I know, unfortunately. My father used to sing it, just like that, when he felt

jolly after hot rum-and-water. It used to make people cry; he used to cry over it himself. *I* never do. Some people think I can't sing a bit. All I can say is that I've often had to sing it six or seven times running in *lots* of studios. I vary it, you know —not the words, but the tune. You must remember that I've only taken to it lately. Do you know Litolff? Well, he's a great composer, and he came to Durien's the other day, and I sang "Ben Bolt," and what do you think he said? Why, he said Madame Alboni couldn't go nearly so high or so low as I did, and that her voice wasn't half so big. He gave me his word of honour. He said I breathed as natural and straight as a baby, and all I want is to get my voice a little more under control. That's what *he* said.'

'Qu'est-ce qu'elle dit?' asked Svengali. And she said it all over again to him in

French—quite French French—of the most colloquial kind. Her accent was not that of the Comédie Française, nor yet that of the Faubourg St. Germain, nor yet that of the shop, or the pavement. It was quaint and expressive—'funny without being vulgar.'

'Barpleu! he was right, Litolff,' said Svengali. 'I assure you, matemoiselle, that I have never heard a voice that can equal yours; you have a talent quite exceptional.'

She blushed with pleasure, and the others thought him a 'beastly cad' for poking fun at the poor girl in such a way. And they thought Monsieur Litolff another.

She then got up and shook the crumbs off her coat, and slipped her feet into Durien's slippers, saying, in English: 'Well, I've got to go back. Life ain't all beer and skittles, and more's the pity; but what's the odds, so long as you're happy?'

On her way out she stopped before Taffy's picture—a chiffonnier with his lantern, bending over a dust-heap. For Taffy was, or thought himself, a passionate realist in those days. He has changed, and now paints nothing but King Arthurs and Guineveres and Lancelots and Elaines, and floating Ladies of Shalott.

'That chiffonnier's basket isn't hitched high enough,' she remarked. 'How could he tap his pick against the rim and make the rag fall into it if it's hitched only halfway up his back? And he's got the wrong sabots, and the wrong lantern; it's *all* wrong.'

'Dear me!' said Taffy, turning very red; 'you seem to know a lot about it. It's a pity you don't paint, yourself.'

'Ah! now you're cross!' said Miss O'Ferrall. 'Oh, maïe aïe!'

She went to the door and paused, look-

ing round benignly. 'What nice teeth you've all three got! That's because you're Englishmen, I suppose, and clean them twice a day. I do too. Trilby O'Ferrall, that's my name, 48 Rue des Pousse-Cailloux! —pose pour l'ensemble, quand ça l'amuse! va-t-en ville, et fait tout ce qui concerne son état! Don't forget. Thanks all, and good-bye.'

'En v'là une orichinale,' said Svengali.

'I think she's lovely,' said Little Billee, the young and tender. 'Oh heavens, what angel's feet! It makes me sick to think she sits for the figure. I'm sure she's quite a lady.'

And in five minutes or so, with the point of an old compass, he scratched in white on the dark red wall a three-quarter profile outline of Trilby's left foot, which was perhaps the more perfect poem of the two.

Slight as it was, this little piece of im-

promptu etching, in its sense of beauty, in its quick seizing of a peculiar individuality, its subtle rendering of a strongly-received impression, was already the work of a master. It was Trilby's foot and nobody else's, nor could have been, and nobody else but Little Billee could have drawn it in just that inspired way.

'Qu'est-ce que c'est, "Ben Bolt"?' inquired Gecko.

Upon which Little Billee was made by Taffy to sit down to the piano and sing it. He sang it very nicely with his pleasant little throaty English barytone.

It was solely in order that Little Billee should have opportunities of practising this graceful accomplishment of his, for his own and his friends' delectation, that the piano had been sent over from London, at great cost to Taffy and the Laird. It had belonged to Taffy's mother, who was dead.

Before he had finished the second verse, Svengali exclaimed: 'Mais c'est tout-à-fait chentil! Allons, Gecko, chouez-nous ça!'

And he put his big hands on the piano, over Little Billee's, pushed him off the music-stool with his great gaunt body, and, sitting on it himself, he played a masterly prelude. It was impressive to hear the complicated richness and volume of the sounds he evoked after Little Billee's gentle 'tink-a-tink.'

And Gecko, cuddling lovingly his violin and closing his upturned eyes, played that simple melody as it had probably never been played before—such passion, such pathos, such a tone!—and they turned it and twisted it, and went from one key to another, playing into each other's hands, Svengali taking the lead; and fugued and canoned and counterpointed and battledored and shuttlecocked it, high and low, soft and loud, in

minor, in pizzicato, and in sordino—adagio, andante, allegretto, scherzo—and exhausted all its possibilities of beauty; till their susceptible audience of three was all but crazed with delight and wonder; and the masterful Ben Bolt, and his over-tender Alice, and his too submissive friend, and his old schoolmaster so kind and so true, and his long-dead schoolmates, and the rustic porch and the mill, and the slab of granite so gray,

'And the dear little nook
By the clear running brook,'

were all magnified into a strange, almost holy poetic dignity and splendour quite undreamed of by whoever wrote the words and music of that unsophisticated little song, which has touched so many simple British hearts that don't know any better—and among them, once, that of the present scribe—long, long ago!

'Sacrepleu! il choue pien, le Checko, hein?' said Svengali, when they had brought this wonderful . double improvisation to a climax and a close. 'C'est mon élève! che le fais chanter sur son fiolon, c'est comme si c'était *moi* qui chantais! ach! si ch'afais pour teux sous de voix, che serais le bremier chanteur du monte! I cannot sing!' he continued. (I will translate him into English, without attempting to translate his accent, which is a mere matter of judiciously transposing p's and b's, and t's and d's, and f's and v's, and g's and k's, and turning the soft French j into sch, and a pretty language into an ugly one.)

'I cannot sing myself, I cannot play the violin, but I can teach—hein, Gecko? And I have a pupil—hein, Gecko?—la betite Honorine;' and here he leered all round with a leer that was not engaging. 'The world shall hear of la betite Honorine some

day—hein, Gecko? Listen all—this is how I teach la betite Honorine! Gecko, play me a little accompaniment in pizzicato.'

And he pulled out of his pocket a kind of little flexible flageolet (of his own invention, it seems), which he screwed together and put to his lips, and on this humble instrument he played 'Ben Bolt,' while Gecko accompanied him, using his fiddle as a guitar, his adoring eyes fixed in reverence on his master.

And it would be impossible to render in any words the deftness, the distinction, the grace, power, pathos, and passion with which this truly phenomenal artist executed the poor old twopenny tune on his elastic penny whistle—for it was little more—such thrilling, vibrating, piercing tenderness, now loud and full, a shrill scream of anguish, now soft as a whisper, a mere melodic breath, more human almost than the human voice itself, a

perfection unattainable even by Gecko, a master, on an instrument which is the acknowledged king of all!

So that the tear, which had been so close to the brink of Little Billee's eye while Gecko was playing, now rose and trembled under his eyelid and spilled itself down his nose; and he had to dissemble and surreptitiously mop it up with his little finger as he leaned his chin on his hand, and cough a little husky, unnatural cough—*pour se donner une contenance!*

He had never heard such music as this, never dreamed such music was possible. He was conscious, while it lasted, that he saw deeper into the beauty, the sadness of things, the very heart of them, and their pathetic evanescence, as with a new, inner eye—even into eternity itself, beyond the veil—a vague cosmic vision that faded when the music was over, but left an unfading reminiscence of its

having been, and a passionate desire to express the like some day through the plastic medium of his own beautiful art.

When Svengali ended, he leered again on his dumb-struck audience, and said: 'That is how I teach la betite Honorine to sing; that is how I teach Gecko to play; that is how I teach "*il bel canto*"! It was lost, the *bel canto*—but I found it, in a dream—I, and nobody else—I—Svengali—I—I—*I!* But that is enough of music; let us play at something else—let us play at this!' he cried, jumping up and seizing a foil and bending it against the wall. . . . 'Come along, Little Pillee, and I will show you something more you don't know. . . .'

So Little Billee took off coat and waistcoat, donned mask and glove and fencing-shoes, and they had an 'assault of arms,' as it is nobly called in French, and in which poor Little Billee came off

very badly. The German Pole fenced wildly, but well.

Then it was the Laird's turn, and he came off badly too; so then Taffy took up the foil, and redeemed the honour of Great Britain, as became a British hussar and a Man of Blood. For Taffy, by long and assiduous practice in the best school in Paris (and also by virtue of his native aptitudes), was a match for any *maître d'armes* in the whole French army, and Svengali got 'what for.'

And when it was time to give up play and settle down to work, others dropped in—French, English, Swiss, German, American, Greek; curtains were drawn and shutters opened; the studio was flooded with light—and the afternoon was healthily spent in athletic and gymnastic exercises till dinner-time.

But Little Billee, who had had enough of fencing and gymnastics for the day, amused himself by filling up with black and white

and red-chalk strokes the outline of Trilby's foot on the wall, lest he should forget his fresh vision of it, which was still to him as the thing itself—an absolute reality, born of a mere glance, a mere chance—a happy caprice!

Durien came in and looked over his shoulder, and exclaimed: 'Tiens! le pied de Trilby! vous avez fait ça d'après nature?'

'Nong!'

'De mémoire, alors?'

'Wee!'

'Je vous en fais mon compliment! Vous avez eu la main heureuse. Je voudrais bien avoir fait ça, moi! C'est un petit chef-d'œuvre que vous avez fait lá—tout bonnement, mon cher! Mais vous élaborez trop. De grâce, n'y touchez plus!'

And Little Billee was pleased, and touched it no more; for Durien was a great sculptor, and sincerity itself.

And then—well, I happen to forget what sort of day this particular day turned into at about six of the clock.

If it was decently fine, the most of them went off to dine at the Restaurant de la Couronne, kept by the Père Trin (in the Rue de Monsieur), who gave you of his best to eat and drink for twenty sols Parisis, or one franc in the coin of the empire. Good distending soups, omelets that were only too savoury, lentils, red and white beans, meat so dressed and sauced and seasoned that you didn't know whether it was beef or mutton—flesh, fowl, or good red herring—or even bad, for that matter—nor very greatly cared.

And just the same lettuce, radishes, and cheese of Gruyère or Brie as you got at the Trois Frères Provençaux (but not the same butter!). And to wash it all down, generous wine in wooden *brocs*—that stained a lovely æsthetic blue everything it was spilled over.

And you hobnobbed with models, male and female, students of law and medicine, painters and sculptors, workmen and *blanchisseuses* and grisettes, and found them very good company, and most improving to your French, if your French was of the usual British kind, and even to some of your manners, if these were very British indeed. And the evening was innocently wound up with billiards, cards, or dominoes at the Café du Luxembourg opposite ; or at the Théâtre du Luxembourg, in the Rue de Madame, to see funny farces with screamingly droll Englishmen in them ; or, still better, at the Jardin Bullier (la Closerie des Lilas), to see the students dance the cancan, or try and dance it yourself, which is not so easy as it seems ; or, best of all, at the Théâtre de l'Odéon, to see Fechter and Madame Doche in the *Dame aux Camélias.*

Or, if it were not only fine, but a Saturday

afternoon into the bargain, the Laird would put on a necktie and a few other necessary things, and the three friends would walk arm-in-arm to Taffy's hotel in the Rue de Seine, and wait outside till he had made himself as presentable as the Laird, which did not take very long. And then (Little Billee was always presentable) they would, arm-in-arm, the huge Taffy in the middle, descend the Rue de Seine and cross a bridge to the Cité, and have a look in at the Morgue. Then back again to the quays on the *rive gauche* by the Pont Neuf, to wend their way westward ; now on one side to look at the print and picture shops and the *magasins* of bric-à-brac, and haply sometimes buy thereof, now on the other to finger and cheapen the second-hand books for sale on the parapet, and even pick up one or two utterly unwanted bargains, never to be read or opened again.

When they reached the Pont des Arts

they would cross it, stopping in the middle to look up the river towards the old Cité and Notre Dame, eastward, and dream unutterable things, and try to utter them. Then, turning westward, they would gaze at the glowing sky and all it glowed upon—the corner of the Tuileries and the Louvre, the many bridges, the Chamber of Deputies, the golden river narrowing its perspective and broadening its bed as it went flowing and winding on its way between Passy and Grenelle to St. Cloud, to Rouen, to the Havre, to England perhaps — where *they* didn't want to be just then; and they would try and express themselves to the effect that life was uncommonly well worth living in that particular city at that particular time of the day and year and century, at that particular epoch of their own mortal and uncertain lives.

Then, still arm-in-arm and chatting gaily,

across the courtyard of the Louvre, through gilded gates well guarded by reckless imperial Zouaves, up the arcaded Rue de Rivoli as far as the Rue Castiglione, where they would stare with greedy eyes at the window of the great corner pastry-cook, and marvel at the beautiful assortment of bonbons, *pralines*, *dragées*, *marrons glacés*—saccharine, crystalline substances of all kinds and colours, as charming to look at as an illumination; precious stones, delicately-frosted sweets, pearls and diamonds so arranged as to melt in the mouth; especially, at this particular time of the year, the monstrous Easter-eggs of enchanting hue, enshrined like costly jewels in caskets of satin and gold; and the Laird, who was well read in his English classics and liked to show it, would opine that 'they managed these things better in France.'

Then across the street by a great gate

into the Allée des Feuillants, and up to the Place de la Concorde—to gaze, but quite without base envy, at the smart people coming back from the Bois de Boulogne. For even in Paris 'carriage people' have a way of looking bored, of taking their pleasure sadly, of having nothing to say to each other, as though the vibration of so many wheels all rolling home the same way every afternoon had hypnotised them into silence, idiocy, and melancholia.

And our three musketeers of the brush would speculate on the vanity of wealth and rank and fashion; on the satiety that follows in the wake of self-indulgence and overtakes it; on the weariness of the pleasures that become a toil—as if they knew all about it, had found it all out for themselves, and nobody else had ever found it out before!

Then they found out something else—

namely, that the sting of healthy appetite was becoming intolerable; so they would betake themselves to an English eating-house in the Rue de la Madeleine (on the left-hand side near the top), where they would renovate their strength and their patriotism on British beef and beer, and household bread, and bracing, biting, stinging yellow mustard, and heroic horseradish, and noble apple-pie, and Cheshire cheese; and get through as much of these in an hour or so as they could for talking, talking, talking; such happy talk! as full of sanguine hope and enthusiasm, of cocksure commendation or condemnation of all painters, dead or alive, of modest but firm belief in themselves and each other, as a Paris Easter-egg is full of sweets and pleasantness (for the young).

And then a stroll on the crowded, well-lighted boulevards, and a bock at the café there, at a little three-legged marble table

right out on the genial asphalt side pavement, still talking nineteen to the dozen.

Then home by dark, old, silent streets and some deserted bridge to their beloved Latin Quarter, the Morgue gleaming cold and still and fatal in the pale lamplight, and Notre Dame pricking up its watchful twin towers, which have looked down for so many centuries on so many happy, sanguine, expansive youths walking arm-in-arm by twos and threes, and for ever talking, talking, talking. . . .

The Laird and Little Billee would see Taffy safe to the door of his *hôtel garni* in the Rue de Seine, where they would find much to say to each other before they said good-night—so much that Taffy and Little Billee would see the Laird safe to *his* door, in the Place St. Anatole des Arts. And then a discussion would arise between Taffy and the Laird on the immortality of

the soul, let us say, or the exact meaning of the word 'gentleman,' or the relative merits of Dickens and Thackeray, or some such recondite and quite unhackneyed theme, and Taffy and the Laird would escort Little Billee to *his* door, in the Place de l'Odéon, and he would re-escort them both back again, and so on till any hour you please.

Or again, if it rained, and Paris through the studio window loomed lead-coloured, with its shiny slate roofs under skies that were ashen and sober, and the wild west wind made woful music among the chimney-pots, and little gray waves ran up the river the wrong way, and the Morgue looked chill and dark and wet, and almost uninviting (even to three healthy-minded young Britons), they would resolve to dine and spend a happy evening at home.

Little Billee, taking with him three francs (or even four), would dive into back streets and buy a yard or so of crusty new bread, well burned on the flat side, a fillet of beef, a litre of wine, potatoes and onions, butter, a little cylindrical cheese called 'bondon de Neufchâtel,' tender curly lettuce, with chervil, parsley, spring onions, and other fine herbs, and a pod of garlic, which would be rubbed on a crust of bread to flavour things with.

Taffy would lay the cloth English-wise, and also make the salad, for which, like everybody else I ever met, he had a special receipt of his own (putting in the oil first and the vinegar after); and indeed his salads were quite as good as everybody else's.

The Laird, bending over the stove, would cook the onions and beef into a savoury Scotch mess so cunningly that you

could not taste the beef for the onions—nor always the onions for the garlic!

And they would dine far better than at le Père Trin's, far better than at the English Restaurant in the Rue de la Madeleine—better than anywhere else on earth!

And after dinner, what coffee, roasted and ground on the spot, what pipes and cigarettes of *caporal*, by the light of the three shaded lamps, while the rain beat against the big north window, and the wind went howling round the quaint old mediæval tower at the corner of the Rue Vieille des Trois Mauvais Ladres (the old street of the three bad lepers), and the damp logs hissed and crackled in the stove!

What jolly talk into the small hours! Thackeray and Dickens again, and Tennyson and Byron (who was 'not dead yet' in those days); and Titian and Velasquez,

and young Millais and Holman Hunt (just out); and Monsieur Ingres and Monsieur Delacroix, and Balzac and Stendahl and George Sand; and the good Dumas! and Edgar Allan Poe; and the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome. . . .

Good, honest, innocent, artless prattle—not of the wisest, perhaps, nor redolent of the very highest culture (which, by the way, can mar as well as make), nor leading to any very practical result; but quite pathetically sweet from the sincerity and fervour of its convictions, a profound belief in their importance, and a proud trust in their life-long immutability.

Oh, happy days and happy nights, sacred to art and friendship! oh, happy times of careless impecuniosity, and youth and hope and health and strength and freedom — with all Paris for a playground,

and its dear old unregenerate Latin Quarter for a workshop and a home!

And, up to then, no kill-joy complications of love!

No, decidedly no! Little Billee had never known such happiness as this—never even dreamed of its possibility.

A day or two after this, our opening day, but in the afternoon, when the fencing and boxing had begun and the trapeze was in full swing, Trilby's 'Milk below!' was sounded at the door, and she appeared—clothed this time, and in her right mind, as it seemed: a tall, straight, flat-backed, square-shouldered, deep-chested, full-bosomed young grisette, in a snowy frilled cap, a neat black gown and white apron, pretty faded, well-darned brown stockings, and well-worn, soft, gray, square-toed slippers of list, without heels and originally

shapeless; but which her feet, uncompromising and inexorable as boot-trees, had ennobled into everlasting classic shapeliness, and stamped with an unforgettable individuality, as does a beautiful hand its well-worn glove — a fact Little Billee was not slow to perceive, with a curious conscious thrill that was only half æsthetic.

Then he looked into her freckled face, and met the kind and tender mirthfulness of her gaze and the plucky frankness of her fine wide smile with a thrill that was not æsthetic at all (nor the reverse), but all of the heart. And in one of his quick flashes of intuitive insight he divined far down beneath the shining surface of those eyes (which seemed for a moment to reflect only a little image of himself against the sky beyond the big north window) a well of sweetness; and floating somewhere in the midst of it the very heart of compassion, generosity, and warm sisterly

love; and under that—alas! at the bottom of all—a thin slimy layer of sorrow and shame. And just as long as it takes for a tear to rise and gather and choke itself back again, this sudden revelation shook his nervous little frame with a pang of pity and the knightly wish to help. But he had no time to indulge in such soft emotions. Trilby was met on her entrance by friendly greetings on all sides.

'Tiens! c'est la grande Trilby!' exclaimed Jules Guinot through his fencing-mask. 'Comment! t'es déjà debout après hier soir? Avons-nous assez rigolé chez Mathieu, hein? Crénom d'un nom, quelle noce! V'là une crémaillère qui peut se vanter d'être diantrement bien pendue, j'espère! Et la petite santé, c' matin?'

'Hé, hé! mon vieux,' answered Trilby. 'Ça boulotte, apparemment! Et toi? et Victorine? Comment qu'a s' porte à

c't'heure? Elle avait un fier coup d'chas-selas! c'est-y jobard, hein? de s' fich 'paf comme ça d'vant l' monde! Tiens, v'là, Gontran! ça marche-t-y, Gontran, Zouzou d' mon cœur?'

'Comme sur des roulettes, ma biche!' said Gontran, *alias* l' Zouzou—a corporal in the Zouaves. 'Mais tu t'es donc mise chiffonnière, à présent? T'as fait banque-route?'

(For Trilby had a chiffonnier's basket strapped on her back, and carried a pick and lantern.)

'Mais-z-oui, mon bon!' she said. 'Dame! pas d' veine hier soir! t'as bien vu! Dans la dêche jusqu'aux omoplates, mon pauv' caporal-sous-off! nom d'un canon—faut bien vivre, s' pas?'

Little Billee's heart-sluices had closed during this interchange of courtesies. He felt it to be of a very slangy kind, because

he couldn't understand a word of it, and he hated slang. All he could make out was the free use of the *tu* and the *toi*, and he knew enough French to know that this implied a great familiarity, which he misunderstood.

So that Jules Guinot's polite inquiries whether Trilby were none the worse after Mathieu's house-warming (which was so jolly), Trilby's kind solicitude about the health of Victorine, who had very foolishly taken a drop too much on that occasion, Trilby's mock regrets that her own bad luck at cards had made it necessary that she should retrieve her fallen fortunes by rag-picking—all these innocent, playful little amenities (which I have tried to write down just as they were spoken) were couched in a language that was as Greek to him—and he felt out of it, jealous and indignant.

'Good-afternoon to you, Mr. Taffy,' said

Trilby, in English. 'I've brought you these objects of art and virtu to make the peace with you. They're the real thing, you know. I borrowed 'em from le père Martin, chiffonnier en gros et en détail, grand officier de la Légion d'Honneur, membre de l'Institut et cetera, treize bis Rue du Puits d'Amour, rez-de-chaussée au fond de la cour à gauche, vis-à-vis le mont-de-piété! He's one of my intimate friends, and——'

'You don't mean to say you're the intimate friend of a *rag-picker?*' exclaimed the good Taffy.

'Oh yes! Pourquoi pas? I never brag; besides, there ain't any beastly pride about le père Martin,' said Trilby, with a wink. 'You'd soon find that out if *you* were an intimate friend of his. This is how it's put on. Do you see? If *you*'ll put it on I'll fasten it for you, and show you how to hold the lantern and handle the pick. You may

come to it yourself some day, you know. Il ne faut jurer de rien! Père Martin will pose for you in person, if you like. He's generally disengaged in the afternoon. He's poor but honest, you know, and very nice and clean; quite the gentleman. He likes artists, especially English—they pay. His wife sells bric-à-brac and old masters: Rembrandts from two francs fifty upwards. They've got a little grandson—a love of a child. I'm his godmother. You know French, I suppose?'

'Oh yes,' said Taffy, much abashed. 'I'm very much obliged to you—very much indeed —a—I—a——'

'Y a pas d' quoi!' said Trilby, divesting herself of her basket and putting it, with the pick and lantern, in a corner. 'Et maintenant, le temps d'absorber une fine de fin sec [a cigarette] et je m' la brise [I'm off]. On m'attend à l'Ambassade d'Autriche. Et

puis zut! Allez toujours, mes enfants. En avant la boxe!'

She sat herself down cross-legged on the model-throne, and made herself a cigarette, and watched the fencing and boxing. Little Billee brought her a chair, which she refused; so he sat down on it himself by her side, and talked to her, just as he would have talked to any young lady at home—about the weather, about Verdi's new opera (which she had never heard), the impressiveness of Notre Dame, and Victor Hugo's beautiful romance (which she had never read), the mysterious charm of Leonardo da Vinci's Lisa Gioconda's smile (which she had never seen)—by all of which she was no doubt rather tickled and a little embarrassed, perhaps also a little touched.

Taffy brought her a cup of coffee, and conversed with her in polite formal French, very well and carefully pronounced; and the

Laird tried to do likewise. *His* French was of that honest English kind that breaks up the stiffness of even an English party; and his jolly manners were such as to put an end to all shyness and constraint, and make self-consciousness impossible.

Others dropped in from neighbouring studios — the usual cosmopolite crew. It was a perpetual come-and-go in this particular studio between four and six in the afternoon.

There were ladies too, *en cheveux*, in caps and bonnets, some of whom knew Trilby, and thee'd and thou'd with familiar and friendly affection, while others mademoiselle'd her with distant politeness, and were mademoiselle'd and madame'd back again. 'Absolument comme à l'Ambassade d'Autriche,' as Trilby observed to the Laird, with a British wink that was by no means ambassadorial.

Then Svengali came and made some of his grandest music, which was as completely thrown away on Trilby as fireworks on a blind beggar, for all she held her tongue so piously.

Fencing and boxing and trapezing seemed to be more in her line; and indeed, to a tone-deaf person, Taffy lunging his full spread with a foil, in all the splendour of his long, lithe, youthful strength, was a far gainlier sight than Svengali at the keyboard flashing his languid bold eyes with a sickly smile from one listener to another, as if to say: 'N'est-ce pas que che suis peau? N'est-ce pas que ch'ai tu chénie? N'est-ce pas que che suis suplime, enfin?'

Then enter Durien the sculptor, who had been presented with a *baignoire* at the Odéon to see *La Dame aux Camélias*, and he invited Trilby and another lady to dine with him *au cabaret* and share his box.

So Trilby didn't go to the Austrian embassy after all, as the Laird observed to Little Billee, with such a good imitation of her wink that Little Billee was bound to laugh.

But Little Billee was not inclined for fun; a dulness, a sense of disenchantment, had come over him; as he expressed it to himself, with pathetic self-pity:

> 'A feeling of sadness and longing
> That is not akin to pain,
> And resembles sorrow only
> As the mist resembles the rain.'

And the sadness, if he had known, was that all beautiful young women with kind sweet faces and noble figures and goddess-like extremities should not be good and pure as they were beautiful; and the longing was a longing that Trilby could be turned into a young lady—say the vicar's daughter in a little Devonshire village—

his sister's friend and co-teacher at the Sunday school, a simple, pure, and pious maiden of gentle birth.

For he adored piety in woman, although he was not pious by any means. His inarticulate, intuitive perceptions were not of form and colour secrets only, but strove to pierce the veil of deeper mysteries in impetuous and dogmatic boyish scorn of all received interpretations. For he flattered himself that he possessed the philosophical and scientific mind, and piqued himself on thinking clearly, and was intolerant of human inconsistency.

That small reserve portion of his ever-active brain which should have lain fallow while the rest of it was at work or play, perpetually plagued itself about the mysteries of life and death, and was for ever propounding unanswerable arguments against the Christian belief, through a kind of inverted

sympathy with the believer. Fortunately for his friends, Little Billee was both shy and discreet, and very tender of other people's feelings; so he kept all his immature juvenile agnosticism to himself.

To atone for such ungainly strong-mindedness in one so young and tender, he was the slave of many little traditional observances which have no very solid foundation in either science or philosophy. For instance, he wouldn't walk under a ladder for worlds, nor sit down thirteen to dinner, nor have his hair cut on a Friday, and was quite upset if he happened to see the new moon through glass. And he believed in lucky and unlucky numbers, and dearly loved the sights and scents and sounds of high mass in some dim old French cathedral, and found them secretly comforting.

Let us hope that he sometimes laughed at himself, if only in his sleeve!

And with all his keenness of insight into life he had a well-brought-up, middle-class young Englishman's belief in the infallible efficacy of gentle birth—for gentle he considered his own and Taffy's and the Laird's, and that of most of the good people he had lived among in England—all people, in short, whose two parents and four grandparents had received a liberal education and belonged to the professional class. And with this belief he combined (or thought he did) a proper democratic scorn for bloated dukes and lords, and even poor inoffensive baronets, and all the landed gentry—everybody who was born an inch higher up than himself.

It is a fairly good middle-class social creed, if you can only stick to it through life in despite of life's experience. It fosters independence and self-respect, and not a few stodgy practical virtues as well. At all events, it keeps you out of bad company,

which is to be found both above and below. *In medio tutissimus ibis!*

And all this melancholy preoccupation, on Little Billee's part, from the momentary gleam and dazzle of a pair of over-perfect feet in an over-æsthetic eye, too much enamoured of mere form!

Reversing the usual process, he had idealised from the base upward!

Many of us, older and wiser than Little Billee, have seen in lovely female shapes the outer garment of a lovely female soul. The instinct which guides us to do this is, perhaps, a right one, more often than not. But more often than not, also, lovely female shapes are terrible complicators of the difficulties and dangers of this earthly life, especially for their owner, and more especially if she be a humble daughter of the people, poor and ignorant, of a yielding nature, too quick to love and trust. This

is all so true as to be trite—so trite as to be a common platitude!

A modern teller of tales, most widely (and most justly) popular, tells us of Californian heroes and heroines who, like Lord Byron's Corsair, were linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes. And so dexterously does he weave his story that the Young Person may read it and learn nothing but good.

My poor heroine was the converse of these engaging criminals; she had all the virtues but one; but the virtue she lacked (the very one of all that plays the title-rôle, and gives its generic name to all the rest of that goodly company) was of such a kind that I have found it impossible so to tell her history as to make it quite fit and proper reading for the ubiquitous young person so dear to us all.

Most deeply to my regret. For I had fondly hoped it might one day be said of

me that whatever my other literary shortcomings might be, I at least had never penned a line which a pure-minded young British mother might not read aloud to her little blue-eyed babe as it lies sucking its little bottle in its little bassinette.

Fate has willed it otherwise.

Would indeed that I could duly express poor Trilby's one shortcoming in some not too familiar medium—in Latin or Greek, let us say—lest the Young Person (in this ubiquitousness of hers, for which Heaven be praised) should happen to pry into these pages when her mother is looking another way.

Latin and Greek are languages the Young Person should not be taught to understand —seeing that they are highly improper languages, deservedly dead—in which pagan bards who should have known better have sung the filthy loves of their gods and goddesses.

But at least am I scholar enough to enter one little Latin plea on Trilby's behalf —the shortest, best, and most beautiful plea I can think of. It was once used in extenuation and condonation of the frailties of another poor weak woman, presumably beautiful, and a far worse offender than Trilby, but who, like Trilby, repented of her ways, and was most justly forgiven—

'Quia multum amavit!'

Whether it be an aggravation of her misdeeds or an extenuating circumstance, no pressure of want, no temptations of greed or vanity, had ever been factors in urging Trilby on her downward career after her first false step in that direction—the result of ignorance, bad advice (from her mother, of all people in the world), and base betrayal. She might have lived in guilty splendour had she chosen, but her wants were few. She

had no vanity, and her tastes were of the simplest, and she earned enough to gratify them all, and to spare.

So she followed love for love's sake only, now and then, as she would have followed art if she had been a man—capriciously, desultorily, more in a frolicsome spirit of *camaraderie* than anything else. Like an amateur, in short—a distinguished amateur who is too proud to sell his pictures, but willingly gives one away now and then to some highly-valued and much-admiring friend.

Sheer gaiety of heart and genial good-fellowship, the difficulty of saying nay to earnest pleading. She was *bonne camarade et bonne fille* before everything. Though her heart was not large enough to harbour more than one light love at a time (even in that Latin Quarter of genially capacious hearts), it had room for many warm friendships; and she was the warmest, most help-

ful, and most compassionate of friends, far more serious and faithful in friendship than in love.

Indeed, she might almost be said to possess a virginal heart, so little did she know of love's heartaches and raptures and torments and clingings and jealousies.

With her it was lightly come and lightly go, and never come back again; as one or two, or perhaps three, picturesque Bohemians of the brush or chisel had found, at some cost to their vanity and self-esteem; perhaps even to a deeper feeling—who knows?

Trilby's father, as she had said, had been a gentleman, the son of a famous Dublin physician and friend of George the Fourth's. He had been a fellow of his college, and had entered holy orders. He also had all the virtues but one; he was a drunkard, and began to drink quite early in life. He soon left the Church, and became a classical tutor,

and failed through this besetting sin of his, and fell into disgrace.

Then he went to Paris, and picked up a few English pupils there, and lost them, and earned a precarious livelihood from hand to mouth, anyhow, and sank from bad to worse.

And when his worst was about reached, he married the famous tartaned and tam-o'-shantered barmaid at the Montagnards Écossais, in the Rue du Paradis Poissonnière (a very fishy paradise indeed); she was a most beautiful Highland lassie of low degree, and she managed to support him, or helped him to support himself, for ten or fifteen years. Trilby was born to them, and was dragged up in some way—*à la grâce de Dieu!*

Patrick O'Ferrall soon taught his wife to drown all care and responsibility in his own simple way, and opportunities for doing so were never lacking to her.

Then he died, and left a posthumous child—born ten months after his death, alas! and whose birth cost its mother her life.

Then Trilby became a *blanchisseuse de fin*, and in two or three years came to grief through her trust in a friend of her mother's. Then she became a model besides, and was able to support her little brother, whom she dearly loved.

At the time this story begins, this small waif and stray was *en pension* with le père Martin, the rag-picker, and his wife, the dealer in bric-à-brac and inexpensive old masters. They were very good people, and had grown fond of the child, who was beautiful to look at, and full of pretty tricks and pluck and cleverness—a popular favourite in the Rue du Puits d'Amour and its humble neighbourhood.

Trilby, for some freak, always chose to speak of him as her godson, and as the

grandchild of le père et la mère Martin, so that these good people had almost grown to believe he really belonged to them.

And almost every one else believed that he was the child of Trilby (in spite of her youth), and she was so fond of him that she didn't mind in the least.

He might have had a worse home.

La mère Martin was pious, or pretended to be; le père Martin was the reverse. But they were equally good for their kind, and though coarse and ignorant and unscrupulous in many ways (as was natural enough), they were gifted in a very full measure with the saving graces of love and charity, especially he. And if people are to be judged by their works, this worthy pair are no doubt both equally well compensated by now for the trials and struggles of their sordid earthly life.

So much for Trilby's parentage.

And as she sat and wept at Madame Doche's impersonation of *La Dame aux Camélias* (with her hand in Durien's) she vaguely remembered, as in a waking dream, now the noble presence of Taffy as he towered cool and erect, foil in hand, gallantly waiting for his adversary to breathe, now the beautiful sensitive face of Little Billee and his deferential courtesy.

And during the *entr'actes* her heart went out in friendship to the jolly Scotch Laird of Cockpen, who came out now and then with such terrible French oaths and abominable expletives (and in the presence of ladies, too!), without the slightest notion of what they meant.

For the Laird had a quick ear, and a craving to be colloquial and idiomatic before everything else, and made many awkward and embarrassing mistakes.

It would be with him as though a polite

Frenchman should say to a fair daughter of Albion, 'D—— my eyes, mees, your tea is getting —— cold; let me tell that good old —— of a Jules to bring you another cup.'

And so forth, till time and experience taught him better. It is perhaps well for him that his first experiments in conversational French were made in the unconventional circle of the Place St. Anatole des Arts.

PART SECOND

'Dieu !, qu'il fait bon la regarder,
La gracieuse, bonne et belle !
Pour les grands biens qui sont en elle
Chacun est prêt de la louer.'

NOBODY knew exactly how Svengali lived, and very few knew where (or why). He occupied a roomy dilapidated garret, *au sixième*, in the Rue Tire-Liard, with a truckle-bed and a pianoforte for furniture, and very little else.

He was poor, for in spite of his talent he had not yet made his mark in Paris. His manners may have been accountable for this. He would either fawn or bully, and could be grossly impertinent. He had a kind of cynical humour, which was more offensive

than amusing, and always laughed at the wrong thing, at the wrong time, in the wrong place. And his laughter was always derisive and full of malice. And his egotism and conceit were not to be borne; and then he was both tawdry and dirty in his person; more greasily, mattedly unkempt than even a really successful pianist has any right to be, even in the best society.

He was not a nice man, and there was no pathos in his poverty—a poverty that was not honourable, and need not have existed at all; for he was constantly receiving supplies from his own people in Austria—his old father and mother, his sisters, his cousins, and his aunts, hard-working, frugal folk of whom he was the pride and the darling.

He had but one virtue—his love of his art; or, rather, his love of himself as a master of his art—*the* master; for he despised, or affected to despise, all other

musicians, living or dead—even those whose work he interpreted so divinely, and pitied them for not hearing Svengali give utterance to their music, which of course they could not utter themselves.

'Ils safent tous un peu toucher du biâno, mais pas grand'chose!'

He had been the best pianist of his time at the Conservatory in Leipsic; and, indeed, there was perhaps some excuse for this overweening conceit, since he was able to lend a quite peculiar individual charm of his own to any music he played, except the highest and best of all, in which he conspicuously failed.

He had to draw the line just above Chopin, where he reached his highest level. It will not do to lend your own quite peculiar individual charm to Handel and Bach and Beethoven; and Chopin is not bad as a *pis-aller*.

He had ardently wished to sing, and had

studied hard to that end in Germany, in Italy, in France, with the forlorn hope of evolving from some inner recess a voice to sing with. But nature had been singularly harsh to him in this one respect—inexorable. He was absolutely without voice, beyond the harsh, hoarse, weak raven's croak he used to speak with, and no method availed to make one for him. But he grew to understand the human voice as perhaps no one has understood it—before or since.

So in his head he went for ever singing, singing, singing, as probably no human nightingale has ever yet been able to sing out loud for the glory and delight of his fellow-mortals; making unheard heavenly melody of the cheapest, trivialest tunes—tunes of the café concert, tunes of the nursery, the shop-parlour, the guard-room, the schoolroom, the pothouse, the slum. There was nothing so humble, so base even, but

what his magic could transform it into the rarest beauty without altering a note. This seems impossible, I know. But if it didn't, where would the magic come in ?

Whatever of heart or conscience—pity, love, tenderness, manliness, courage, reverence, charity—endowed him at his birth had been swallowed up by this one faculty, and nothing of them was left for the common uses of life. He poured them all into his little flexible flageolet.

Svengali playing Chopin on the pianoforte, even (or especially) Svengali playing 'Ben Bolt' on that penny whistle of his, was as one of the heavenly host.

Svengali walking up and down the earth seeking whom he might cheat, betray, exploit, borrow money from, make brutal fun of, bully if he dared, cringe to if he must—man, woman, child, or dog—was about as bad as they make 'em.

To earn a few pence when he couldn't borrow them he played accompaniments at café concerts, and even then he gave offence; for in his contempt for the singer he would play too loud, and embroider his accompaniments with brilliant improvisations of his own, and lift his hands on high and bring them down with a bang in the sentimental parts, and shake his dirty mane and shrug his shoulders, and smile and leer at the audience, and do all he could to attract their attention to himself. He also gave a few music lessons (not at ladies' schools, let us hope), for which he was not well paid, presumably, since he was always without a sou, always borrowing money, that he never paid back, and exhausting the pockets and the patience of one acquaintance after another.

He had but two friends. There was Gecko, who lived in a little garret close by in

the Impasse des Ramoneurs, and who was second violin in the orchestra of the Gymnase, and shared his humble earnings with his master, to whom, indeed, he owed his great talent, not yet revealed to the world.

Svengali's other friend and pupil was (or rather had been) the mysterious Honorine, of whose conquest he was much given to boast, hinting that she was *une jeune femme du monde.* This was not the case. Mademoiselle Honorine Cahen (better known in the Quartier Latin as Mimi la Salope) was a dirty, drabby little dolly-mop of a Jewess, a model for the figure—a very humble person indeed, socially.

She was, however, of a very lively disposition, and had a charming voice, and a natural gift of singing so sweetly that you forgot her accent, which was that of the *tout ce qu'il y a de plus canaille.*

She used to sit at Carrel's, and during the pose she would sing. When Little Billee first heard her he was so fascinated that 'it made him sick to think she sat for the figure' — an effect, by the way, that was always produced upon him by all specially attractive figure models of the gentler sex, for he had a reverence for woman. And before everything else, he had for the singing woman an absolute worship. He was especially thrall to the contralto—the deep low voice that breaks and changes in the middle and soars all at once into a magnified angelic boy treble. It pierced through his ears to his heart, and stirred his very vitals.

He had once heard Madame Alboni, and it had been an epoch in his life; he would have been an easy prey to the sirens! Even beauty paled before the lovely female voice singing in the middle of the note — the nightingale killed the bird of paradise.

I need hardly say that poor Mimi la Salope had not the voice of Madame Alboni, nor the art; but it was a beautiful voice of its little kind, always in the very middle of the note, and her artless art had its quick seduction.

She sang little songs of Béranger's—'Grand'mère, parlez-nous de lui!' or 'T'en souviens-tu? disait un capitaine—' or 'Enfants, c'est moi qui suis Lisette!' and such like pretty things, that almost brought the tears to Little Billee's easily-moistened eyes.

But soon she would sing little songs that were not by Béranger—little songs with slang words Little Billee hadn't French enough to understand; but from the kind of laughter with which the points were received by the 'rapins' in Carrel's studio he guessed these little songs were vile, though the touching little voice was as that of the

seraphim still; and he knew the pang of disenchantment and vicarious shame.

Svengali had heard her sing at the Brasserie des Porcherons in the Rue du Crapaud-volant, and had volunteered to teach her; and she went to see him in his garret, and he played to her, and leered and ogled, and flashed his bold, black, beady Jew's eyes into hers, and she straightway mentally prostrated herself in reverence and adoration before this dazzling specimen of her race.

So that her sordid, mercenary little gutter-draggled soul was filled with the sight and the sound of him, as of a lordly, godlike, shawm-playing, cymbal-banging hero and prophet of the Lord God of Israel—David and Saul in one!

And then he set himself to teach her —kindly and patiently at first, calling her sweet little pet names—his 'Rose of Sharon,'

his 'pearl of Pabylon,' his 'cazelle-eyed liddle Cherusalem skylark'—and promised her that she should be the queen of the nightingales.

But before he could teach her anything he had to unteach her all she knew; her breathing, the production of her voice, its emission — everything was wrong. She worked indefatigably to please him, and soon succeeded in forgetting all the pretty little sympathetic tricks of voice and phrasing Mother Nature had taught her.

But though she had an exquisite ear she had no real musical intelligence—no intelligence of any kind except about sous and centimes; she was as stupid as a little downy owl, and her voice was just a light native warble, a throstle's pipe, all in the head and nose and throat (a voice he *didn't* understand, for once), a thing of mere youth and health and bloom and high spirits—

like her beauty, such as it was—*beauté du diable, beauté damnée.*

She did her very best, and practised all she could in this new way, and sang herself hoarse: she scarcely ate or slept for practising. He grew harsh and impatient and coldly severe, and of course she loved him all the more; and the more she loved him the more nervous she got and the worse she sang. Her voice cracked; her ear became demoralised; her attempts to vocalise grew almost as distressing as Trilby's. So that he lost his temper completely, and called her terrible names, and pinched and punched her with his big bony hands till she wept worse than Niobe, and borrowed money of her—five-franc pieces, even francs and demifrancs—which he never paid her back; and browbeat and bullied and bully-ragged her till she went quite mad for love of him, and would have jumped out of his

sixth-floor window to give him a moment's pleasure!

He did not ask her to do this—it never occurred to him, and would have given him no pleasure to speak of. But one fine Sabbath morning (a Saturday, of course) he took her by the shoulders and chucked her, neck and crop, out of his garret, with the threat that if she ever dared to show her face there again he would denounce her to the police—an awful threat to the likes of poor Mimi la Salope!

'For where did all those five-franc pieces come from—*hein?*—with which she had tried to pay for all the singing lessons that had been thrown away upon her? Not from merely sitting to painters—*hein?*'

Thus the little gazelle-eyed Jerusalem skylark went back to her native streets again—a mere mud-lark of the Paris slums—her wings clipped, her spirit quenched

and broken, and with no more singing left in her than a common or garden sparrow —not so much!

And so, no more of 'la betite Honorine!'

The morning after this adventure Svengali woke up in his garret with a tremendous longing to spend a happy day; for it was a Sunday, and a very fine one.

He made a long arm and reached his waistcoat and trousers off the floor, and emptied the contents of their pockets on to his tattered blanket; no silver, no gold, only a few sous and two-sou pieces, just enough to pay for a meagre *premier déjeuner!*

He had cleared out Gecko the day before, and spent the proceeds (ten francs, at least) in one night's riotous living—pleasures in which Gecko had had no share; and he could think of no one to

borrow money from but Little Billee, Taffy, and the Laird, whom he had neglected and left untapped for days.

So he slipped into his clothes, and looked at himself in what remained of a little zinc mirror, and found that his forehead left little to be desired, but that his eyes and temples were decidedly grimy. Wherefore, he poured a little water out of a little jug into a little basin, and twisting the corner of his pocket-handkerchief round his dirty forefinger, he delicately dipped it, and removed the offending stains. His fingers, he thought, would do very well for another day or two as they were; he ran them through his matted black mane, pushed it behind his ears, and gave it the twist he liked (and that was so much disliked by his English friends). Then he put on his *béret* and his velveteen cloak, and went forth into the sunny streets, with

a sense of the fragrance and freedom and pleasantness of Sunday morning in Paris in the month of May.

He found Little Billee sitting in a zinc hip-bath, busy with soap and sponge; and was so tickled and interested by the sight that he quite forgot for the moment what he had come for.

'Himmel! Why the devil are you doing that?' he asked, in his German-Hebrew-French.

'Doing *what?*' asked Little Billee, in his French of Stratford-atte-Bowe.

'Sitting in water and playing with a cake of soap and a sponge!'

'Why, to try and get myself *clean*, I suppose!'

'Ach! And how the devil did you get yourself *dirty*, then?'

To this Little Billee found no immediate answer, and went on with his ablutions after

the hissing, splashing, energetic fashion of Englishmen; and Svengali laughed loud and long at the spectacle of a little Englishman trying to get himself clean — *tâchant de se nettoyer!*

When such cleanliness had been attained as was possible under the circumstances, Svengali begged for the loan of two hundred francs, and Little Billee gave him a five-franc piece.

Content with this, *faute de mieux*, the German asked him when he would be trying to get himself clean again, as he would much like to come and see him do it.

'Demang mattang, à votre sairveece!' said Little Billee, with a courteous bow.

'*What!! Monday too!!* Gott in Himmel! you try to get yourself clean *every day?*'

And he laughed himself out of the room, out of the house, out of the Place de l'Odéon —all the way to the Rue de Seine, where

dwelt the 'Man of Blood,' whom he meant to propitiate with the story of that original, Little Billee, trying to get himself clean—that he might borrow another five-franc piece, or perhaps two.

As the reader will no doubt anticipate, he found Taffy in his bath also, and fell to laughing with such convulsive laughter, such twistings, screwings, and doublings of himself up, such pointings of his dirty forefinger at the huge naked Briton, that Taffy was offended, and all but lost his temper.

'What the devil are you cackling at, sacred head of pig that you are? Do you want to be pitched out of that window into the Rue de Seine? You filthy black Hebrew sweep! Just you wait a bit; *I'll* wash your head for you!'

And Taffy jumped out of his bath, such a towering figure of righteous Herculean wrath that Svengali was appalled, and fled.

'Donnerwetter!' he exclaimed as he tumbled down the narrow staircase of the Hôtel de Seine; 'what for a thick head! what for a pigdog! what for a rotten, brutal, *verfluchter kerl* of an Englander!'

Then he paused for thought.

'Now will I go to that Scottish Englander, in the Place St. Anatole des Arts, for that other five-franc piece. But first will I wait a little while till he has perhaps finished trying to get himself clean.'

So he breakfasted at the crémerie Souchet, in the Rue Clopin-Clopant, and, feeling quite safe again, he laughed and laughed till his very sides were sore.

Two Englanders in one day—as naked as your hand!—a big one and a little one, trying to get themselves clean!

He rather flattered himself he had scored off those two Englanders.

After all, he was right perhaps, from his

point of view; you can get as dirty in a week as in a lifetime, so what's the use of taking such a lot of trouble? Besides, so long as you are clean enough to suit your kind, to be any cleaner would be priggish and pedantic, and get you disliked.

Just as Svengali was about to knock at the Laird's door, Trilby came downstairs from Durien's, very unlike herself. Her eyes were red with weeping, and there were great black rings round them; she was pale under her freckles.

'Fous afez du chacrin, matemoiselle?' asked he.

She told him that she had neuralgia in her eyes, a thing she was subject to; that the pain was maddening, and generally lasted twenty-four hours.

'Perhaps I can cure you; come in here with me.'

The Laird's ablutions (if he had indulged

in any that morning) were evidently over for the day. He was breakfasting on a roll and butter, and coffee of his own brewing. He was deeply distressed at the sight of poor Trilby's sufferings, and offered whisky and coffee and gingernuts, which she would not touch.

Svengali told her to sit down on the divan, and sat opposite to her, and bade her look him well in the white of the eyes.

'Recartez-moi pien tans le planc tes yeux.'

Then he made little passes and counter-passes on her forehead and temples and down her cheek and neck. Soon her eyes closed and her face grew placid. After a while, a quarter of an hour perhaps, he asked her if she suffered still.

'Oh! presque plus du tout, monsieur—c'est le ciel.'

In a few minutes more he asked the Laird if he knew German.

'Just enough to understand,' said the Laird (who had spent a year in Düsseldorf), and Svengali said to him in German: 'See, she sleeps not, but she shall not open her eyes. Ask her.'

'Are you asleep, Miss Trilby?' asked the Laird.

'No.'

'Then open your eyes and look at me.'

She strained to open her eyes, but could not, and said so.

Then Svengali said, again in German, 'She shall not open her mouth. Ask her.'

'Why couldn't you open your eyes, Miss Trilby?'

She strained to open her mouth and speak, but in vain.

'She shall not rise from the divan. Ask her.'

But Trilby was spellbound, and could not move.

'I will now set her free,' said Svengali.

And, lo! she got up and waved her arms, and cried, 'Vive la Prusse! me v'là guérie!' and in her gratitude she kissed Svengali's hand; and he leered, and showed his big brown teeth and the yellow whites at the top of his big black eyes, and drew his breath with a hiss.

'Now I'll go to Durien's and sit. How can I thank you, monsieur? You have taken all my pain away.'

'Yes, matemoiselle. I have got it myself; it is in my elbows. But I love it, because it comes from you. Every time you have pain you shall come to me, 12 Rue Tire-Liard, au sixième au-dessus de l'entresol, and I will cure you and take your pain myself——'

'Oh, you are too good!' and in her high spirits she turned round on her heel and uttered her portentous war-cry, 'Milk below!'

The very rafters rang with it, and the piano gave out a solemn response.

'What is that you say, matemoiselle?'

'Oh, it's what the milkmen say in England.'

'It is a wonderful cry, matemoiselle—*wunderschön!* It comes straight through the heart; it has its roots in the stomach, and blossoms into music on the lips like the voice of Madame Alboni—voce sulle labbre! It is good production—c'est un cri du cœur!'

Trilby blushed with pride and pleasure.

'Yes, matemoiselle! I only know one person in the whole world who can produce the voice so well as you! I give you my word of honour.'

'Who is it, monsieur—yourself?'

'Ach, no, matemoiselle; I have not that privilege. I have unfortunately no voice to produce. . . . It is a waiter at the Café de

la Rotonde, in the Palais Royal; when you call for coffee, he says "Boum!" in basso profondo. Tiefstimme—F moll below the line—it is phenomenal! It is like a cannon —a cannon also has very good production, matemoiselle. They pay him for it a thousand francs a year, because he brings many customers to the Café de la Rotonde, where the coffee isn't very good, although it costs three sous a cup dearer than at the Café Larsouille in the Rue Flamberge-au-Vent. When he dies they will search all France for another, and then all Germany, where the good big waiters come from—and the cannons—but they will not find him, and the Café de la Rotonde will be bankrupt—unless you will consent to take his place. Will you permit that I shall look into your mouth, matemoiselle?'

She opened her mouth wide, and he looked into it.

'Himmel! the roof of your mouth is like the dome of the Panthéon; there is room in it for "toutes les gloires de la France," and a little to spare! The entrance to your throat is like the middle porch of St. Sulpice when the doors are open for the faithful on All Saints' Day; and not one tooth is missing — thirty-two British teeth as white as milk and as big as knuckle-bones! and your little tongue is scooped out like the leaf of a pink peony, and the bridge of your nose is like the belly of a Stradivarius—what a sounding-board! and inside your beautiful big chest the lungs are made of leather! and your breath, it embalms—like the breath of a beautiful white heifer fed on the buttercups and daisies of the Vaterland! and you have a quick, soft, susceptible heart, a heart of gold, matemoiselle—all that sees itself in your face!

'"Votre cœur est un luth suspendu !
Aussitôt qu'on le touche, il résonne. . . ."

What a pity you have not also the musical organisation!'

'Oh, but I *have*, monsieur; you heard me sing "Ben Bolt," didn't you? What makes you say that?'

Svengali was confused for a moment. Then he said: 'When I play the "Rosemonde" of Schubert, matemoiselle, you look another way and smoke a cigarette. . . . You look at the big Taffy, at the Little Billee, at the pictures on the walls, or out of window, at the sky, the chimney-pots of Notre Dame de Paris; you do not look at Svengali!—Svengali, who looks at you with all his eyes, and plays you the "Rosemonde" of Schubert!'

'Oh, maïe aïe!' exclaimed Trilby; 'you *do* use lovely language!'

'But never mind, matemoiselle; when

your pain arrives, then shall you come once more to Svengali, and he shall take it away from you, and keep it himself for a soufenir of you when you are gone. And when you have it no more, he shall play you the "Rosemonde" of Schubert, all alone for you; and then "Messieurs les étutiants, montez à la chaumière!" . . . because it is gayer! *And you shall see nothing, hear nothing, think of nothing but Svengali, Svengali, Svengali!*'

Here he felt his peroration to be so happy and effective that he thought it well to go at once and make a good exit. So he bent over Trilby's shapely freckled hand and kissed it, and bowed himself out of the room, without even borrowing his five-franc piece.

'He's a rum 'un, ain't he?' said Trilby. 'He reminds me of a big hungry spider, and makes me feel like a fly! But he's

cured my pain! he's cured my pain! Ah! you don't know what my pain is when it comes!'

'I wouldn't have much to do with him, all the same!' said the Laird. 'I'd sooner have any pain than have it cured in that unnatural way, and by such a man as that! He's a bad fellow, Svengali—I'm sure of it! He mesmerised you; that's what it is—mesmerism! I've often heard of it, but never seen it done before. They get you into their power, and just make you do any blessed thing they please—lie, murder, steal—anything! and kill yourself into the bargain when they've done with you! It's just too terrible to think of!'

So spake the Laird, earnestly, solemnly, surprised out of his usual self, and most painfully impressed—and his own impressiveness grew upon him and impressed him still more. He loomed quite prophetic.

Cold shivers went down Trilby's back as she listened. She had a singularly impressionable nature, as was shown by her quick and ready susceptibility to Svengali's hypnotic influence. And all that day, as she posed for Durien (to whom she did not mention her adventure), she was haunted by the memory of Svengali's big eyes and the touch of his soft, dirty finger-tips on her face; and her fear and her repulsion grew together.

And 'Svengali, Svengali, Svengali!' went ringing in her head and ears till it became an obsession, a dirge, a knell, an unendurable burden, almost as hard to bear as the pain in her eyes.

'*Svengali, Svengali, Svengali!*'

At last she asked Durien if he knew him.

'Parbleu! Si je connais Svengali!'

'Qu'est-ce que t'en penses?'

'Quand il sera mort, ça fera une fameuse crapule de moins!'

'CHEZ CARREL.'

Carrel's atelier (or painting-school) was in the Rue Notre Dame des Potirons St. Michel, at the end of a large courtyard, where there were many large dirty windows facing north, and each window let the light of heaven into a large dirty studio.

The largest of these studios, and the dirtiest, was Carrel's, where some thirty or forty art students drew and painted from the nude model every day but Sunday from eight till twelve, and for two hours in the afternoon, except on Saturdays, when the afternoon was devoted to much-needed Augean sweepings and cleanings.

One week the model was male, the next female, and so on, alternating throughout the year.

A stove, a model-throne, stools, boxes, some fifty strongly-built low chairs with backs, a couple of score easels and many drawing-boards, completed the *mobilier*.

The bare walls were adorned with endless caricatures—*des charges*—in charcoal and white chalk; and also the scrapings of many palettes—a polychromous decoration not unpleasing.

For the freedom of the studio and the use of the model each student paid ten francs a month to the *massier*, or senior student, the responsible bell-wether of the flock; besides this, it was expected of you, on your entrance or initiation, that you should pay for your footing—your *bienvenue*—some thirty, forty, or fifty francs, to be spent on cakes and rum punch all round.

Every Friday Monsieur Carrel, a great artist, and also a stately, well-dressed, and most courteous gentleman (duly decorated

with the red rosette of the Legion of Honour), came for two or three hours and went the round, spending a few minutes at each drawing-board or easel—ten or even twelve when the pupil was an industrious and promising one.

He did this for love, not money, and deserved all the reverence with which he inspired this somewhat irreverent and most unruly company, which was made up of all sorts.

Graybeards who had been drawing and painting there for thirty years and more, and remembered other masters than Carrel, and who could draw and paint a torso almost as well as Titian or Velasquez—almost, but not quite—and who could never do anything else, and were fixtures at Carrel's for life.

Younger men who in a year or two, or three or five, or ten or twenty, were bound to make their mark, and perhaps follow in

the footsteps of the master; others as conspicuously singled out for failure and future mischance—for the hospital, the garret, the river, the Morgue, or, worse, the traveller's bag, the road, or even the paternal counter.

Irresponsible boys, mere *rapins*, all laugh and chaff and mischief—*blague et bagout Parisien;* little lords of misrule—wits, butts, bullies; the idle and industrious apprentice, the good and the bad, the clean and the dirty (especially the latter)—all more or less animated by a certain *esprit de corps*, and working very happily and genially together, on the whole, and always willing to help each other with sincere artistic counsel if it was asked for seriously, though it was not always couched in terms very flattering to one's self-love.

Before Little Billee became one of this band of brothers he had been working for three or four years in a London art school,

drawing and painting from the life; he had also worked from the antique in the British Museum—so that he was no novice.

As he made his début at Carrel's one Monday morning he felt somewhat shy and ill at ease. He had studied French most earnestly at home in England, and could read it pretty well, and even write it and speak it after a fashion; but he spoke it with much difficulty, and found studio French a different language altogether from the formal and polite language he had been at such pains to acquire. Ollendorff does not cater for the Quartier Latin. Acting on Taffy's advice—for Taffy had worked under Carrel—Little Billee handed sixty francs to the *massier* for his *bienvenue*—a lordly sum—and this liberality made a most favourable impression, and went far to destroy any little prejudice that might have been caused by the daintiness of his dress, the cleanliness of his person,

and the politeness of his manners. A place was assigned to him, and an easel and a board; for he elected to stand at his work and begin with a chalk drawing. The model (a male) was posed, and work began in silence. Monday morning is always rather sulky everywhere (except perhaps in Judee). During the ten minutes' rest three or four students came and looked at Little Billee's beginnings, and saw at a glance that he thoroughly well knew what he was about, and respected him for it.

Nature had given him a singularly light hand—or rather two, for he was ambidextrous, and could use both with equal skill; and a few months' practice at a London life school had quite cured him of that purposeless indecision of touch which often characterises the prentice hand for years of apprenticeship, and remains with the amateur for life. The lightest and most careless of

his pencil strokes had a precision that was inimitable, and a charm that specially belonged to him, and was easy to recognise at a glance. His touch on either canvas or paper was like Svengali's on the keyboard—unique.

As the morning ripened little attempts at conversation were made—little breakings of the ice of silence. It was Lambert, a youth with a singularly facetious face, who first woke the stillness with the following uncalled-for remarks in English very badly pronounced :

'Av you seen my fahzere's ole shoes ?'

'I av not seen your fahzere's ole shoes.'

Then, after a pause :

'Av you seen my fahzere's ole 'at ?'

'I av not seen your fahzere's ole 'at !'

Presently another said, 'Je trouve qu'il a une jolie tête, l'Anglais.'

But I will put it all into English :

'I find that he has a pretty head—the Englishman ! What say *you*, Barizel ?'

'Yes; but why has he got eyes like brandy-balls, two a penny?'

'Because he's an Englishman!'

'Yes; but why has he got a mouth like a guinea-pig, with two big teeth in front like the double blank at dominoes?'

'Because he's an Englishman!'

'Yes; but why has he got a back without any bend in it, as if he'd swallowed the Colonne Vendôme as far up as the battle of Austerlitz?'

'Because he's an Englishman!'

And so on, till all the supposed characteristics of Little Billee's outer man were exhausted. Then:

'Papelard!'

'What?'

'*I* should like to know if the Englishman says his prayers before going to bed.'

'Ask him.'

'Ask him yourself!'

'*I* should like to know if the Englishman has sisters; and if so, how old and how many and what sex.'

'Ask him.'

'Ask him yourself!'

'*I* should like to know the detailed and circumstantial history of the Englishman's first love, and how he lost his innocence!'

'Ask him,' etc. etc. etc.

Little Billee, conscious that he was the subject of conversation, grew somewhat nervous. Soon he was addressed directly.

'Dites donc, l'Anglais?'

'Kwaw?' said Little Billee.

'Avez-vous une sœur?'

'Wee.'

'Est-ce qu'elle vous ressemble?'

'Nong.'

'C'est bien dommage! Est-ce qu'elle dit ses prières, le soir, en se couchant?'

A fierce look came into Little Billee's eyes

and a redness to his cheeks, and this particular form of overture to friendship was abandoned.

Presently Lambert said, 'Si nous mettions l'Anglais à l'échelle?'

Little Billee, who had been warned, knew what this ordeal meant.

They tied you to a ladder, and carried you in procession up and down the courtyard, and if you were nasty about it they put you under the pump.

During the next rest it was explained to him that he must submit to this indignity, and the ladder (which was used for reaching the high shelves round the studio) was got ready.

Little Billee smiled a singularly winning smile, and suffered himself to be bound with such good-humour that they voted it wasn't amusing, and unbound him, and he escaped the ordeal by ladder.

Taffy had also escaped, but in another way. When they tried to seize him he took up the first *rapin* that came to hand, and using him as a kind of club, he swung him about so freely and knocked down so many students and easels and drawing-boards with him, and made such a terrific rumpus, that the whole studio had to cry for 'pax!' Then he performed feats of strength of such a surprising kind that the memory of him remained in Carrel's studio for years, and he became a legend, a tradition, a myth! It is now said (in what still remains of the Quartier Latin) that he was seven feet high, and used to juggle with the *massier* and model as with a pair of billiard balls, using only his left hand!

To return to Little Billee. When it struck twelve, the cakes and rum punch arrived—a very goodly sight that put every one in a good temper.

The cakes were of three kinds—Babas,

Madeleines, and Savarins — three sous apiece, fourpence-halfpenny the set of three. No nicer cakes are made in France, and they are as good in the Quartier Latin as anywhere else; no nicer cakes are made in the whole world, that I know of. You must begin with the Madeleine, which is rich and rather heavy; then the Baba; and finish up with the Savarin, which is shaped like a ring, very light, and flavoured with rum. And then you must really leave off.

The rum punch was tepid, very sweet, and not a bit too strong.

They dragged the model-throne into the middle, and a chair was put on for Little Billee, who dispensed his hospitality in a very polite and attractive manner, helping the *massier* first, and then the other graybeards in the order of their grayness, and so on down to the model.

Presently, just as he was about to help

himself, he was asked to sing them an English song. After a little pressing he sang them a song about a gay cavalier who went to serenade his mistress (and a ladder of ropes, and a pair of masculine gloves that didn't belong to the gay cavalier, but which he found in his lady's bower)—a poor sort of song, but it was the nearest approach to a comic song he knew. There are four verses to it, and each verse is rather long. It does not sound at all funny to a French audience, and even with an English one Little Billee was not good at comic songs.

He was, however, much applauded at the end of each verse. When he had finished, he was asked if he were *quite* sure there wasn't any more of it, and they expressed a deep regret; and then each student, straddling on his little thick-set chair as on a horse, and clasping the back of it in both hands, galloped round Little Billee's throne

quite seriously—the strangest procession he had ever seen. It made him laugh till he cried, so that he could not eat or drink.

Then he served more punch and cake all round; and just as he was going to begin himself, Papelard said:

'Say, you others, I find that the Englishman has something of truly distinguished in the voice, something of sympathetic, of touching—something of *je ne sais quoi!*'

Bouchardy: 'Yes, yes—something of *je ne sais quoi!* That's the very phrase—n'est-ce pas, vous autres?—that is a good phrase that Papelard has just invented to describe the voice of the Englishman. He is very intelligent—Papelard.'

Chorus: 'Perfect, perfect; he has the genius of characterisation—Papelard. Dites donc, l'Anglais! once more that beautiful song—*hein?* Nous vous en prions tous.'

Little Billee willingly sang it again, with

even greater applause, and again they galloped, but the other way round and faster, so that Little Billee became quite hysterical, and laughed till his sides ached.

Then Dubosc: 'I find there is something of very capitous and exciting in English music — of very stimulating. And you, Bouchardy?'

Bouchardy: 'Oh, me! It is above all the *words* that I admire; they have something of passionate, of romantic—"ze-ese glâ-âves, zese glâ-âves—zey do not belong to me." I don't know what that means, but I love that sort of—of—of—of—*je ne sais quoi*, in short! Just *once* more, l'Anglais; only *once*, the *four* couplets.'

So he sang it a third time, all four verses, while they leisurely ate and drank and smoked and looked at each other, nodding solemn commendation of certain phrases in the song: 'Très bien!' 'Très bien!' 'Ah!

voilà qui est bien réussi!' 'Épatant, ça!' 'Trés fin!' etc. etc. For, stimulated by success, and rising to the occasion, he did his very utmost to surpass himself in emphasis of gesture and accent and histrionic drollery —heedless of the fact that not one of his listeners had the slightest notion what his song was about.

It was a sorry performance.

And it was not till he had sung it four times that he discovered the whole thing was an elaborate impromptu farce, of which he was the butt, and that of all his royal spread not a crumb or a drop was left for himself.

It was the old fable of the fox and the crow! And to do him justice, he laughed as heartily as any one, as if he thoroughly enjoyed the joke—and when you take jokes in that way people soon leave off poking fun at you. It is almost as good as being very

big, like Taffy, and having a choleric blue eye!

Such was Little Billee's first experience of Carrel's studio, where he spent many happy mornings and made many good friends.

No more popular student had ever worked there within the memory of the grayest graybeards; none more amiable, more genial, more cheerful, self-respecting, considerate, and polite, and certainly none with greater gifts for art.

Carrel would devote at least fifteen minutes to him, and invited him often to his own private studio. And often, on the fourth or fifth day of the week, a group of admiring students would be gathered by his easel watching him as he worked.

'C'est un rude lapin, l'Anglais! au moins il sait son orthographe en peinture, ce coco-là!'

Such was the verdict on Little Billee at

Carrel's studio; and I can conceive no much loftier praise.

. . . . .

Young as she was (seventeen or eighteen, or thereabouts), and also tender (like Little Billee), Trilby had singularly clear and quick perceptions in all matters that concerned her tastes, fancies, or affections, and thoroughly knew her own mind, and never lost much time in making it up.

On the occasion of her first visit to the studio in the Place St. Anatole des Arts, it took her just five minutes to decide that it was quite the nicest, homeliest, genialest, jolliest studio in the whole Quartier Latin, or out of it, and its three inhabitants, individually and collectively, were more to her taste than any one else she had ever met.

In the first place, they were English, and she loved to hear her mother-tongue and speak it. It awoke all manner of tender

recollections, sweet reminiscences of her childhood, her parents, her old home—such a home as it was—or, rather, such homes; for there had been many flittings from one poor nest to another. The O'Ferralls had been as birds on the bough.

She had loved her parents very dearly; and, indeed, with all their faults, they had many endearing qualities—the qualities that so often go with those particular faults—charm, geniality, kindness, warmth of heart, the constant wish to please, the generosity that comes before justice, and lends its last sixpence and forgets to pay its debts!

She knew other English and American artists, and had sat to them frequently for the head and hands; but none of these, for general agreeableness of aspect or manner, could compare in her mind with the stalwart and magnificent Taffy, the

jolly fat Laird of Cockpen, the refined, sympathetic, and elegant Little Billee; and she resolved that she would see as much of them as she could, that she would make herself at home in that particular studio, and necessary to its *locataires;* and without being the least bit vain or self-conscious, she had no doubts whatever of her power to please—to make herself both useful and ornamental if it suited her purpose to do so.

Her first step in this direction was to borrow Père Martin's basket and lantern and pick (he had more than one set of these trade properties) for the use of Taffy, whom she feared she might have offended by the freedom of her comments on his picture.

Then, as often as she felt it to be discreet, she sounded her war-cry at the studio door and went in and made kind inquiries, and, sitting cross-legged on the model-throne, ate her bread and cheese and smoked her

cigarette and 'passed the time of day,' as she chose to call it; telling them all such news of the Quartier as had come within her own immediate ken. She was always full of little stories of other studios, which, to do her justice, were always good-natured, and probably true—quite so, as far as she was concerned; she was the most literal person alive; and she told all these *ragots*, *cancans*, *et potins d'atelier* in a quaint and amusing manner. The slightest look of gravity or boredom on one of those three faces, and she made herself scarce at once.

She soon found opportunities for usefulness also. If a costume were wanted, for instance, she knew where to borrow it, or hire it or buy it cheaper than any one anywhere else. She procured stuffs for them at cost price, as it seemed, and made them into draperies and female garments of any kind that was wanted, and sat in them for

the toreador's sweetheart (she made the mantilla herself), for Taffy's starving dressmaker about to throw herself into the Seine, for Little Billee's studies of the beautiful French peasant girl in his picture, now so famous, called 'The Pitcher Goes to the Well.

Then she darned their socks and mended their clothes, and got all their washing done properly and cheaply at her friend Madame Boisse's, in the Rue des Cloîtres Ste. Pétronille.

And then again, when they were hard up and wanted a good round sum of money for some little pleasure excursion, such as a trip to Fontainebleau or Barbizon for two or three days, it was she who took their watches and scarf-pins and things to the Mount of Piety in the Street of the Well of Love (where dwelt *ma tante*, which is French for 'my uncle' in this connection), in order to raise the necessary funds.

She was, of course, most liberally paid for all these little services, rendered with such pleasure and goodwill—far too liberally, she thought. She would have been really happier doing them for love.

Thus in a very short time she became a *persona gratissima* — a sunny and ever-welcome vision of health and grace and liveliness and unalterable good-humour, always ready to take any trouble to please her beloved 'Angliches,' as they were called by Madame Vinard, the handsome shrill-voiced *concierge*, who was almost jealous; for she was devoted to the Angliches too —and so was Monsieur Vinard—and so were the little Vinards.

She knew when to talk and when to laugh and when to hold her tongue; and the sight of her sitting cross-legged on the model-throne darning the Laird's socks or sewing buttons on his shirts or repairing

the smoke-holes in his trousers was so pleasant that it was painted by all three. One of these sketches (in water-colour, by Little Billee) sold the other day at Christie's for a sum so large that I hardly dare to mention it. It was done in an afternoon.

Sometimes on a rainy day, when it was decided they should dine at home, she would fetch the food and cook it, and lay the cloth, and even make the salad. She was a better saladist than Taffy, a better cook than the Laird, a better caterer than Little Billee. And she would be invited to take her share in the banquet. And on these occasions her tremulous happiness was so immense that it would be quite pathetic to see — almost painful; and their three British hearts were touched by thoughts of all the loneliness and homelessness, the expatriation, the half-conscious loss of caste, that all this eager childish clinging revealed.

And that is why (no doubt) that with all this familiar intimacy there was never any hint of gallantry or flirtation in any shape or form whatever—*bonne camaraderie, voilà tout.* Had she been Little Billee's sister she could not have been treated with more real respect. And her deep gratitude for this unwonted compliment transcended any passion she had ever felt. As the good Lafontaine so prettily says—

> 'Ces animaux vivaient entre eux comme cousins ;
> Cette union si douce, et presque fraternelle,
> Edifiait tous les voisins !'

And then their talk! It was to her as the talk of the gods in Olympus, save that it was easier to understand, and she could always understand it. For she was a very intelligent person, in spite of her wofully neglected education, and most ambitious to learn—a new ambition for her.

So they lent her books—English books :

Dickens, Thackeray, Walter Scott — which she devoured in the silence of the night, the solitude of her little attic in the Rue des Pousse-Cailloux, and new worlds were revealed to her. She grew more English every day; and that was a good thing.

Trilby speaking English and Trilby speaking French were two different beings. Trilby's English was more or less that of her father, a highly-educated man; her mother, who was a Scotchwoman, although an uneducated one, had none of the ungainliness that mars the speech of so many Englishwomen in that humble rank—no droppings of the *h*, no broadening of the *o*'s and *a*'s.

Trilby's French was that of the Quartier Latin—droll, slangy, piquant, quaint, picturesque—quite the reverse of ungainly, but in which there was scarcely a turn of phrase that would not stamp the speaker as being

hopelessly, emphatically 'no lady!' Though it was funny without being vulgar, it was perhaps a little *too* funny!

And she handled her knife and fork in the dainty English way, as no doubt her father had done—and his; and, indeed, when alone with them she was so absolutely 'like a lady' that it seemed quite odd (though very seductive) to see her in a grisette's cap and dress and apron. So much for her English training.

But enter a Frenchman or two, and a transformation effected itself immediately—a new incarnation of Trilbyness—so droll and amusing that it was difficult to decide which of her two incarnations was the more attractive.

It must be admitted that she had her faults—like Little Billee.

For instance, she would be miserably jealous of any other woman who came to the studio, to sit or scrub or sweep or do any-

thing else, even of the dirty tipsy old hag who sat for Taffy's 'Found Drowned'—'as if she couldn't have sat for it herself!'

And then she would be cross and sulky, but not for long—an injured martyr, soon ready to forgive and be forgiven.

She would give up any sitting to come and sit to her three English friends. Even Durien had serious cause for complaint.

Then her affection was exacting: she always wanted to be told one was fond of her, and she dearly loved her own way, even in the sewing on of buttons and the darning of socks, which was innocent enough. But when it came to the cutting and fashioning of garments for a toreador's bride, it was a nuisance not to be borne!

'What could *she* know of toreadors' brides and their wedding-dresses?' the Laird would indignantly ask—as if he were a toreador

himself; and this was the aggravating side of her irrepressible Trilbyness.

In the caressing, demonstrative tenderness of her friendship she 'made the soft eyes' at all three indiscriminately. But sometimes Little Billee would look up from his work as she was sitting to Taffy or the Laird, and find her gray eyes fixed on him with an all-enfolding gaze, so piercingly, penetratingly, unutterably sweet and kind and tender, such a brooding, dovelike look of soft and warm solicitude, that he would feel a flutter at his heart, and his hand would shake so that he could not paint; and in a waking dream he would remember that his mother had often looked at him like that when he was a small boy, and she a beautiful young woman untouched by care or sorrow; and the tear that always lay in readiness so close to the corner of Little Billee's eye would find it very difficult to keep itself in its proper place—unshed.

And at such moments the thought that Trilby sat for the figure would go through him like a knife.

She did not sit promiscuously to anybody who asked, it is true. But she still sat to Durien; to the great Gérôme; to M. Carrel, who scarcely used any other model.

It was poor Trilby's sad distinction that she surpassed all other models as Calypso surpassed her nymphs; and whether by long habit, or through some obtuseness in her nature, or lack of imagination, she was equally unconscious of self with her clothes on or without! Truly, she could be naked and unashamed—in this respect an absolute savage.

She would have ridden through Coventry, like Lady Godiva—but without giving it a thought beyond wondering why the streets were empty and the shops closed and the blinds pulled down—would even have looked

up to Peeping Tom's shutter with a friendly nod, had she known he was behind it.

In fact, she was absolutely without that kind of shame, as she was without any kind of fear. But she was destined soon to know both fear and shame.

And here it would not be amiss for me to state a fact well known to all painters and sculptors who have used the nude model (except a few shady pretenders, whose purity, not being of the right sort, has gone rank from too much watching), namely, that nothing is so chaste as nudity. Venus herself, as she drops her garments and steps on to the model-throne, leaves behind her on the floor every weapon in her armoury by which she can pierce to the grosser passions of man. The more perfect her unveiled beauty, the more keenly it appeals to his higher instincts. And where her beauty fails (as it almost always

does somewhere in the Venuses who sit for hire), the failure is so lamentably conspicuous in the studio light—the fierce light that beats on this particular throne — that Don Juan himself, who has not got to paint, were fain to hide his eyes in sorrow and disenchantment, and fly to other climes.

All beauty is sexless in the eyes of the artist at his work—the beauty of man, the beauty of woman, the heavenly beauty of the child, which is the sweetest and best of all.

Indeed it is woman, lovely woman, whose beauty falls the shortest, for sheer lack of proper physical training.

As for Trilby, G——, to whom she sat for his Phryne, once told me that the sight of her thus was a thing to melt Sir Galahad, yet sober Silenus, and chasten Jove himself — a thing to Quixotise a modern French masher! I can well believe him. For myself, I only speak of Trilby as I have

seen her — clothed and in her right mind. She never sat to me for any Phryne, never bared herself to me, nor did I ever dream of asking her. I would as soon have asked the Queen of Spain to let me paint her legs! But I have worked from many female models in many countries, some of them the best of their kind. I have also, like Svengali, seen Taffy 'trying to get himself clean,' either at home or in the swimming-baths of the Seine; and never a sitting woman among them all who could match for grace or finish or splendour of outward form that mighty Yorkshireman sitting in his tub, or sunning himself, like Ilyssus, at the Bains Henri Quatre, or taking his running header *à la hussarde*, off the spring-board at the Bains Deligny, with a group of wondering Frenchmen gathered round.

Up he shot himself into mid-air with a sounding double downward kick, parabolic-

ally; then, turning a splendid semi-demi-somersault against the sky, down he came headlong, his body straight and stiff as an arrow, and made his clean hole in the water without splash or sound, to reappear a hundred yards farther on!

'Sac à papier! quel gaillard que cet Anglais, hein?'

'A-t-on jamais vu un torse pareil!'

'Et les bras, donc!'

'Et les jambes, nom d'un tonnerre!'

'Mâtin! J'aimerais mieux être en colère contre lui qu'il ne soit en colère contre moi!' etc. etc. etc.

Omne ignotum pro magnifico!

If our climate were such that we could go about without any clothes on, we probably should; in which case, although we should still murder and lie and steal and bear false witness against our neighbour, and break the

Sabbath Day, and take the Lord's name in vain, much deplorable wickedness of another kind would cease to exist for sheer lack of mystery; and Christianity would be relieved of its hardest task in this sinful world, and Venus Aphrodite (*alias* Aselgeia) would have to go a-begging along with the tailors and dressmakers and bootmakers, and perhaps our bodies and limbs would be as those of the Theseus and Venus of Milo; who was no Venus, except in good looks!

At all events, there would be no cunning, cruel deceptions, no artful taking in of artless inexperience, no unduly hurried waking-up from Love's young dream, no handing down to posterity of hidden uglinesses and weaknesses, and worse!

And also many a flower, now born to blush unseen, would be reclaimed from its desert, and suffered to hold its own, and flaunt away with the best in the inner garden of roses!

And poor Miss Gale, the figure-model, would be permitted to eke out her slender earnings by teaching calisthenics and deportment to the daughters of the British upper middle-class at Miss Pinkerton's academy for young ladies, The Mall, Chiswick.

And here let me humbly apologise to the casual reader for the length and possible irrelevancy of this digression, and for its subject. To those who may find matter for sincere disapprobation or even grave offence in a thing that has always seemed to me so simple, so commonplace, as to be hardly worth talking or writing about, I can only plead a sincerity equal to theirs, and as deep a love and reverence for the gracious, goodly shape that God is said to have made after His own image for inscrutable purposes of His own.

Nor, indeed, am I pleading for such a subversive and revolutionary measure as the

wholesale abolition of clothes, being the chilliest of mortals, and quite unlike Mr. Theseus or Mr. Ilyssus either.

Sometimes Trilby would bring her little brother to the studio in the Place St. Anatole des Arts, in his *beaux habits de Pâques*, his hair well curled and pomatumed, his hands and face well washed.

He was a very engaging little mortal. The Laird would fill his pockets full of Scotch goodies, and paint him as a little Spaniard in 'Le Fils du Toréador,' a sweet little Spaniard with blue eyes, and curly locks as light as tow, and a complexion of milk and roses, in singular and piquant contrast to his swarthy progenitors.

Taffy would use him as an Indian club or a dumb-bell, to the child's infinite delight, and swing him on the trapeze, and teach him *la boxe*.

And the sweetness and fun of his shrill, happy, infantile laughter (which was like an echo of Trilby's, only an octave higher) so moved and touched and tickled one that Taffy had to look quite fierce, so he might hide the strange delight of tenderness that somehow filled his manly bosom at the mere sound of it (lest Little Billee and the Laird should think him goody-goody); and the fiercer Taffy looked, the less this small mite was afraid of him.

Little Billee made a beautiful water-colour sketch of him, just as he was, and gave it to Trilby, who gave it to le père Martin, who gave it to his wife with strict injunctions not to sell it as an old master. Alas! it *is* an old master now, and Heaven only knows who has got it!

Those were happy days for Trilby's little brother, happy days for Trilby, who was immensely fond of him, and very proud. And

the happiest day of all was when the *trois* Angliches took Trilby and Jeannot (for so the mite was called) to spend the Sunday in the woods at Meudon, and breakfast and dine at the *garde champêtre's*. Swings, peep-shows, donkey-rides; shooting at a mark with cross-bows and little pellets of clay, and smashing little plaster figures and winning macaroons; losing one's self in the beautiful forest; catching newts and tadpoles and young frogs; making music on *mirlitons*. Trilby singing 'Ben Bolt' into a *mirliton* was a thing to be remembered, whether one would or no!

Trilby on this occasion came out in a new character, *en demoiselle*, with a little black bonnet, and a gray jacket of her own making.

To look at (but for her loose, square-toed, heel-less silk boots laced up the inner side), she might have been the daughter of an English dean—until she undertook to teach

the Laird some favourite cancan steps. And then the Laird himself, it must be admitted, no longer looked like the son of a worthy, God-fearing, Sabbath-keeping Scotch writer to the signet.

This was after dinner, in the garden, at *la loge du garde champêtre*. Taffy and Jeannot and Little Billee made the necessary music on their *mirlitons*, and the dancing soon became general, with plenty also to look on, for the *garde* had many customers who dined there on summer Sundays.

It is no exaggeration to say that Trilby was far and away the belle of that particular ball, and there have been worse balls in much finer company, and far plainer women!

Trilby lightly dancing the cancan (there are cancans and cancans) was a singularly gainly and seductive person—*et vera incessu patuit dea!* Here, again, she was funny without being vulgar. And for mere grace

(even in the cancan), she was the forerunner of Miss Kate Vaughan; and for sheer fun, the precursor of Miss Nelly Farren!

And the Laird, trying to dance after her ('dongsong le konkong,' as he called it), was too funny for words; and if genuine popular success is a true test of humour, no greater humourist ever danced a *pas seul.*

What Englishmen could do in France during the fifties, and yet manage to preserve their self-respect, and even the respect of their respectable French friends!

'Voilà l'espayce de hom ker jer swee!' said the Laird, every time he bowed in acknowledgment of the applause that greeted his performance of various solo steps of his own—Scotch reels and sword-dances that came in admirably. . . .

Then, one fine day (as a judgment on him, no doubt), the Laird fell ill, and the doctor had to be sent for, and he ordered a nurse.

But Trilby would hear of no nurses, not even a Sister of Charity! She did all the nursing herself, and never slept a wink for three successive days and nights.

On the third day the Laird was out of all danger, the delirium was past, and the doctor found poor Trilby fast asleep by the bedside.

Madame Vinard, at the bedroom door, put her finger to her lips, and whispered: 'Quel bonheur! il est sauvé, M. le Docteur; écoutez! il dit ses prières en Anglais, ce brave garçon!'

The good old doctor, who didn't understand a word of English, listened, and heard the Laird's voice, weak and low, but quite clear, and full of heartfelt fervour, intoning, solemnly:

'"Green herbs, red peppers, mussels, saffron,
Soles, onions, garlic, roach, and dace—
All these you eat at Terré's Tavern
In that one dish of bouillabaisse!"'

'Ah! mais c'est très bien de sa part, ce brave jeune homme! rendre grâces au ciel comme cela, quand le danger est passé! très bien, très bien!'

Sceptic and Voltairian as he was, and not the friend of prayer, the good doctor was touched, for he was old, and therefore kind and tolerant, and made allowances.

And afterwards he said such sweet things to Trilby about it all, and about her admirable care of his patient, that she positively wept with delight—like sweet Alice with hair so brown, whenever Ben Bolt gave her a smile.

All this sounds very goody-goody, but it's true.

So it will be easily understood how the *trois* Angliches came in time to feel for Trilby quite a peculiar regard, and looked forward with sorrowful forebodings to the day when this singular and pleasant little

quartet would have to be broken up, each of them to spread his wings and fly away on his own account, and poor Trilby to be left behind all by herself. They would even frame little plans whereby she might better herself in life, and avoid the many snares and pitfalls that would beset her lonely path in the Quartier Latin when they were gone.

Trilby never thought of such things as these; she took short views of life, and troubled herself about no morrows.

There was, however, one jarring figure in her little fool's paradise, a baleful and most ominous figure that constantly crossed her path, and came between her and the sun, and threw its shadow over her, and that was Svengali.

He also was a frequent visitor at the studio in the Place St. Anatole, where much was forgiven him for the sake of his music,

especially when he came with Gecko and they made music together. But it soon became apparent that they did not come there to play to the three Angliches; it was to see Trilby, whom they both had taken it into their heads to adore, each in a different fashion:

Gecko, with a humble, doglike worship that expressed itself in mute, pathetic deference and looks of lowly self-depreciation, of apology for his own unworthy existence, as though the only requital he would ever dare to dream of were a word of decent politeness, a glance of tolerance or good-will—a mere bone to a dog.

Svengali was a bolder wooer. When he cringed, it was with a mock humility full of sardonic threats; when he was playful, it was with a terrible playfulness, like that of a cat with a mouse—a weird, ungainly cat, and most unclean; a sticky, haunting,

long, lean, uncanny, black spider-cat, if there is such an animal outside a bad dream.

It was a great grievance to him that she had suffered from no more pains in her eyes. She had; but preferred to endure them rather than seek relief from *him*.

So he would playfully try to mesmerise her with his glance, and sidle up nearer and nearer to her, making passes and counter-passes, with stern command in his eyes, till she would shake and shiver and almost sicken with fear, and all but feel the spell come over her, as in a nightmare, and rouse herself with a great effort and escape.

If Taffy were there he would interfere with a friendly 'Now then, old fellow, none of that!' and a jolly slap on the back, which would make Svengali cough for an hour, and paralyse his mesmeric powers for a week.

Svengali had a stroke of good-fortune. He played at three grand concerts with Gecko, and had a well-deserved success. He even gave a concert of his own, which made a furore, and blossomed out into beautiful and costly clothes of quite original colour and shape and pattern, so that people would turn round and stare at him in the street — a thing he loved. He felt his fortune was secure, and ran into debt with tailors, hatters, shoemakers, jewellers, but paid none of his old debts to his friends. His pockets were always full of printed slips—things that had been written about him in the papers—and he would read them aloud to everybody he knew, especially to Trilby, as she sat darning socks on the model-throne while the fencing and boxing were in train. And he would lay his fame and his fortune at her feet, on condition that she should share her life with him.

'Ach, himmel, Drilpy!' he would say, 'you don't know what it is to be a great pianist like me—*hein?* What is your Little Billee, with his stinking oil-bladders, sitting mum in his corner, his mahlstick and his palette in one hand, and his twiddling little footle pig's-hair brush in the other! What noise does *he* make? When his little fool of a picture is finished he will send it to London, and they will hang it on a wall with a lot of others, all in a line, like recruits called out for inspection, and the yawning public will walk by in procession and inspect, and say "damn!" Svengali will go to London *himself.* Ha! ha! He will be all alone on a platform, and play as nobody else can play; and hundreds of beautiful Engländerinnen will see and hear and go mad with love for him—Prinzessen, Comtessen, Serene English Altessen. They will soon lose their Serenity and their

Highness when they hear Svengali! They will invite him to their palaces, and pay him a thousand francs to play for them; and after, he will loll in the best arm-chair, and they will sit all round him on footstools, and bring him tea and gin and *küchen* and *marrons glacés*, and lean over him and fan him—for he is tired after playing them for a thousand francs of Chopin! Ha, ha! I know all about it—*hein?*

'And he will not look at them, even! He will look inward, at his own dream—and his dream will be about Drilpy—to lay his talent, his glory, his thousand francs at her beautiful white feet!

'Their stupid, big, fat, tow-headed, putty-nosed husbands will be mad with jealousy, and long to box him, but they will be afraid. Ach! those beautiful Anclaises! they will think it an honour to mend his shirts, to sew buttons on his pantaloons; to darn his

socks, as you are doing now for that sacred imbecile of a Scotchman who is always trying to paint toréadors, or that sweating, pig-headed bullock of an Englander who is always trying to get himself dirty and then to get himself clean again!—*e da capo!*

'Himmel! what big socks are those! what potato-sacks!

'Look at your Taffy! what is he good for but to bang great musicians on the back with his big bear's paw! He finds that droll, the bullock! . . .

'Look at your Frenchmen there—your damned conceited *verfluchte* pig-dogs of Frenchmen — Durien, Barizel, Bouchardy! What can a Frenchman talk of, *hein?* Only himself, and run down everybody else! His vanity makes me sick! He always thinks the world is talking about *him*, the fool! He forgets that there's a fellow called *Svengali* for the world to talk about! I tell

you, Drilpy, it is about *me* the world is talking—me and nobody else—me, me, me!

'Listen what they say in the *Figaro*' (reads it).

'What do you think of that, *hein?* What would your Durien say if people wrote of *him* like that?

'But you are not listening, sapperment! great big she-fool that you are—sheep's-head! Dummkopf! Donnerwetter! you are looking at the chimney-pots when Svengali talks! Look a little lower down between the houses, on the other side of the river! There is a little ugly gray building there, and inside are eight slanting slabs of brass, all of a row, like beds in a school dormitory, and one fine day you shall lie asleep on one of those slabs—you, Drilpy, who would not listen to Svengali, and therefore lost him! . . . And over the middle of you will be a little leather apron, and over your head a

little brass tap, and all day long and all night the cold water shall trickle, trickle, trickle all the way down your beautiful white body to your beautiful white feet till they turn green, and your poor, damp, draggled, muddy rags will hang above you from the ceiling for your friends to know you by; drip, drip, drip! But you will have no friends. . . .

'And people of all sorts, strangers, will stare at you through the big plate-glass window—Englanders, chiffonniers, painters and sculptors, workmen, piou-pious, old hags of washerwomen—and say, "Ah! what a beautiful woman was that! Look at her! She ought to be rolling in her carriage and pair!" And just then who should come by, rolling in his carriage and pair, smothered in furs, and smoking a big cigar of the Havana, but Svengali, who will jump out, and push the canaille aside, and say, "Ha!

ha! that is la grande Drilpy, who would not listen to Svengali, but looked at the chimney-pots when he told her of his manly love, and——"'

'Hi! damn it, Svengali, what the devil are you talking to Trilby about? You're making her sick; can't you see? Leave off, and go to the piano, man, or I'll come and slap you on the back again!'

Thus would that sweating, pig-headed bullock of an Englander stop Svengali's love-making and release Trilby from bad quarters of an hour.

Then Svengali, who had a wholesome dread of the pig-headed bullock, would go to the piano and make impossible discords, and say: 'Dear Drilpy, come and sing "Pen Polt!" I am thirsting for those so beautiful chest notes! Come!'

Poor Trilby needed little pressing when

she was asked to sing, and would go through her lamentable performance, to the great discomfort of Little Billee. It lost nothing of its grotesqueness from Svengali's accompaniment, which was a triumph of cacophony, and he would encourage her—*Très pien, très pien, ça y est!*

When it was over, Svengali would test her ear, as he called it, and strike the C in the middle and then the F just above, and ask which was the highest; and she would declare they were both exactly the same. It was only when he struck a note in the bass and another in the treble that she could perceive any difference, and said that the first sounded like Père Martin blowing up his wife, and the second like her little godson trying to make the peace between them.

She was quite tone-deaf, and didn't know it; and he would pay her extravagant com-

pliments on her musical talent, till Taffy would say: 'Look here, Svengali, let's hear *you* sing a song!'

And he would tickle him so masterfully under the ribs that the creature howled and became quite hysterical.

Then Svengali would vent his love of teasing on Little Billee, and pin his arms behind his back and swing him round, saying: 'Himmel! what's this for an arm? It's like a girl's!'

'It's strong enough to paint!' said Little Billee.

'And what's this for a leg? It's like a mahlstick!'

'It's strong enough to kick, if you don't leave off!'

And Little Billee, the young and tender, would let out his little heel and kick the German's shins; and just as the German was going to retaliate, big Taffy would pin

his arms and make him sing another song, more discordant than Trilby's—for he didn't dream of kicking Taffy; of that you may be sure!

Such was Svengali—only to be endured for the sake of his music—always ready to vex, frighten, bully, or torment anybody or anything smaller and weaker than himself—from a woman or a child to a mouse or a fly.

PART THIRD

'Par deçà, ne dela la mer
Ne sçay dame ni damoiselle
Qui soit en tous biens parfaits telle—
C'est un songe que d'y penser:
Dieu! qu'il fait bon la regarder!'

ONE lovely Monday morning in late September, at about eleven or so, Taffy and the Laird sat in the studio—each opposite his picture, smoking, nursing his knee, and saying nothing. The heaviness of Monday weighed on their spirits more than usual, for the three friends had returned late on the previous night from a week spent at Barbizon and in the forest of Fontainebleau—a heavenly week among the painters; Rousseau, Millet, Corot, Daubigny, let us suppose,

and others less known to fame this day. Little Billee, especially, had been fascinated by all this artistic life in blouses and sabots and immense straw hats and panamas, and had sworn to himself and to his friends that he would some day live and die there—painting the forest as it is, and peopling it with beautiful people out of his own fancy—leading a healthy outdoor life of simple wants and lofty aspirations.

At length Taffy said: 'Bother work this morning! I feel much more like a stroll in the Luxembourg Gardens and lunch at the Café de l'Odéon, where the omelets are good and the wine isn't blue.'

'The very thing I was thinking of myself,' said the Laird.

So Taffy slipped on his old shooting-jacket and his old Harrow cricket cap, with the peak turned the wrong way, and the Laird put on an old greatcoat of Taffy's

that reached to his heels, and a battered straw hat they had found in the studio when they took it; and both sallied forth into the mellow sunshine on the way to Carrel's. For they meant to seduce Little Billee from his work, that he might share in their laziness, greediness, and general demoralisation.

And whom should they meet coming down the narrow turreted Rue Vieille des Trois Mauvais Ladres but Little Billee himself, with an air of general demoralisation so tragic that they were quite alarmed. He had his paint-box and field-easel in one hand and his little valise in the other. He was pale, his hat on the back of his head, his hair staring all at sixes and sevens, like a sick Scotch terrier's.

'Good Lord! what's the matter?' said Taffy.

'Oh! oh! oh! she's sitting at Carrel's!'

'Who's sitting at Carrel's?'

'Trilby! sitting to all those ruffians! There she was, just as I opened the door; I saw her, I tell you! The sight of her was like a blow between the eyes, and I bolted! I shall never go back to that beastly hole again! I'm off to Barbizon, to paint the forest; I was coming round to tell you. Good-bye! . . .'

'Stop a minute—are you mad?' said Taffy, collaring him.

'Let me go, Taffy—let me go, damn it! I'll come back in a week—but I'm going now! Let me go; do you hear?'

'But look here—I'll go with you.'

'No; I want to be alone—quite alone. Let me go, I tell you!'

'I shan't let you go unless you swear to me, on your honour, that you'll write directly you get there, and every day till you come back. Swear!'

'All right; I swear—honour bright! Now

there! Good-bye—good-bye; back on Sunday—good-bye!' And he was off.

'Now, what the devil does all that mean?' asked Taffy, much perturbed.

'I suppose he's shocked at seeing Trilby in that guise, or disguise, or unguise, sitting at Carrel's—he's such an odd little chap. And I must say, I'm surprised at Trilby. It's a bad thing for her when we're away. What could have induced her? She never sat in a studio of that kind before. I thought she only sat to Durien and old Carrel.'

They walked for a while in silence.

'Do you know, I've got a horrid idea that the little fool's in love with her!'

'I've long had a horrid idea that *she's* in love with *him*.'

'That would be a very stupid business,' said Taffy.

They walked on, brooding over those two

horrid ideas, and the more they brooded, considered, and remembered, the more convinced they became that both were right.

'Here's a pretty kettle of fish!' said the Laird—'and talking of fish, let's go and lunch.'

And so demoralised were they that Taffy ate three omelets without thinking, and the Laird drank two half-bottles of wine, and Taffy three, and they walked about the whole of that afternoon for fear Trilby should come to the studio—and were very unhappy.

This is how Trilby came to sit at Carrel's studio:

Carrel had suddenly taken it into his head that he would spend a week there, and paint a figure among his pupils, that they might see and paint with—and if possible like—him. And he had asked Trilby as a great

favour to be the model, and Trilby was so devoted to the great Carrel that she readily consented. So that Monday morning found her there, and Carrel posed her as Ingres's famous figure in his picture called 'La Source,' holding an earthenware pitcher on her shoulder.

And the work began in religious silence. Then in five minutes or so Little Billee came bursting in, and as soon as he caught sight of her he stopped and stood as one petrified, his shoulders up, his eyes staring. Then lifting his arms, he turned and fled.

'Qu'est ce qu'il a donc, ce Litrebili?' exclaimed one or two students (for they had turned his English nickname into French).

'Perhaps he's forgotten something,' said another. 'Perhaps he's forgotten to brush his teeth and part his hair!'

'Perhaps he's forgotten to say his prayers!' said Barizel.

'He'll come back, I hope!' exclaimed the master.

And the incident gave rise to no further comment.

But Trilby was much disquieted, and fell to wondering what on earth was the matter.

At first she wondered in French: French of the Quartier Latin. She had not seen Little Billee for a week, and wondered if he were ill. She had looked forward so much to his painting her—painting her beautifully—and hoped he would soon come back, and lose no time.

Then she began to wonder in English—nice clean English of the studio in the Place St. Anatole des Arts—her father's English—and suddenly a quick thought pierced her through and through, and made the flesh tingle on her insteps and the backs of her hands, and bathed her brow and temples with sweat.

She had good eyes, and Little Billee had a singularly expressive face.

Could it possibly be that he was *shocked* at seeing her sitting there?

She knew that he was peculiar in many ways. She remembered that neither he nor Taffy nor the Laird had ever asked her to sit for the figure, though she would have been only too delighted to do so for them. She also remembered how Little Billee had always been silent whenever she alluded to her posing for the 'altogether,' as she called it, and had sometimes looked pained and always very grave.

She turned alternately pale and red, pale and red all over, again and again, as the thought grew up in her — and soon the growing thought became a torment.

This new-born feeling of shame was unendurable—its birth a travail that racked and rent every fibre of her moral being, and

she suffered agonies beyond anything she had ever felt in her life.

'What is the matter with you, my child? Are you ill?' asked Carrel, who, like every one else, was very fond of her, and to whom she had sat as a child ('L'Enfance de Psyché,' now in the Luxembourg Gallery, was painted from her).

She shook her head, and the work went on.

Presently she dropped her pitcher, that broke into bits; and putting her two hands to her face she burst into tears and sobs—and there, to the amazement of everybody, she stood crying like a big baby—*La source aux larmes?*

'What *is* the matter, my poor dear child?' said Carrel, jumping up and helping her off the throne.

'Oh, I don't know—I don't know—I'm ill—very ill—let me go home!'

And with kind solicitude and despatch

they helped her on with her clothes, and Carrel sent for a cab and took her home.

And on the way she dropped her head on his shoulder, and wept, and told him all about it as well as she could, and Monsieur Carrel had tears in his eyes too, and wished to Heaven he had never induced her to sit for the figure, either then or at any other time. And pondering deeply and sorrowfully on such terrible responsibility (he had grown-up daughters of his own), he went back to the studio; and in an hour's time they got another model and another pitcher, and went to work again. So the pitcher went to the well once more.

And Trilby, as she lay disconsolate on her bed all that day and all the next, and all the next again, thought of her past life with agonies of shame and remorse that made the pain in her eyes seem as a light and welcome

relief. For it came, and tortured worse and lasted longer than it had ever done before. But she soon found, to her miserable bewilderment, that mind-aches are the worst of all.

Then she decided that she must write to one of the *trois* Angliches, and chose the the Laird.

She was more familiar with him than with the other two: it was impossible not to be familiar with the Laird if he liked one, as he was so easy-going and demonstrative, for all that he was such a canny Scot! Then she had nursed him through his illness; she had often hugged and kissed him before the whole studio full of people—and even when alone with him it had always seemed quite natural for her to do so. It was like a child caressing a favourite young uncle or elder brother. And though the good Laird was the least susceptible of mortals, he would often find these innocent blandishments a somewhat

trying ordeal! She had never taken such a liberty with Taffy; and as for Little Billee, she would sooner have died!

So she wrote to the Laird. I give her letter without the spelling, which was often faulty, although her nightly readings had much improved it:

'My dear Friend—I am very unhappy. I was sitting at Carrel's, in the Rue des Potirons, and Little Billee came in, and was so shocked and disgusted that he ran away and never came back.

'I saw it all in his face.

'I sat there because M. Carrel asked me to. He has always been very kind to me—M. Carrel—ever since I was a child; and I would do anything to please him, but never *that* again.

'He was there too.

'I never thought anything about sitting

before. I sat first as a child to M. Carrel. Mamma made me, and made me promise not to tell papa, and so I didn't. It soon seemed as natural to sit for people as to run errands for them, or wash and mend their clothes. Papa wouldn't have liked my doing that either, though we wanted the money badly. And so he never knew.

'I have sat for the "altogether" to several other people besides—M. Gérôme, Durien, the two Hennequins, and Émile Baratier; and for the head and hands to lots of people, and for the feet only to Charles Faure, André Besson, Mathieu Dumoulin, and Collinet. Nobody else.

'It seemed as natural for me to sit as for a man. Now I see the awful difference.

'And I have done dreadful things besides, as you must know—as all the Quartier knows. Baratier and Besson; but not Durien, though people think so. Nobody else, I swear—

except old Monsieur Penque at the beginning, who was mamma's friend.

'It makes me almost die of shame and misery to think of it; for that's not like sitting. I knew how wrong it was all along—and there's no excuse for me, none. Though lots of people do as bad, and nobody in the Quartier seems to think any the worse of them.

'If you and Taffy and Little Billee cut me, I really think I shall go mad and die. Without your friendship I shouldn't care to live a bit. Dear Sandy, I love your little finger better than any man or woman I ever met; and Taffy's and Little Billee's little fingers too.

'What shall I do? I daren't go out for fear of meeting one of you. Will you come and see me?

'I am never going to sit again, not even for the face and hands. I am going back to

be a *blanchisseuse de fin* with my old friend Angèle Boisse, who is getting on very well indeed, in the Rue des Cloîtres Ste. Pétronille.

'You *will* come and see me, won't you? I shall be in all day till you do. Or else I will meet you somewhere, if you will tell me where and when; or else I will go and see you in the studio, if you are sure to be alone. Please don't keep me waiting long for an answer.

'You don't know what I'm suffering.

'Your ever loving, faithful friend,

'TRILBY O'FERRALL.'

She sent this letter by hand, and the Laird came in less than ten minutes after she had sent it; and she hugged and kissed and cried over him so that he was almost ready to cry himself; but he burst out laughing instead—which was better and more in

his line, and very much more comforting—and talked to her so nicely and kindly and naturally that by the time he left her humble attic in the Rue des Pousse-Cailloux her very aspect, which had quite shocked him when he first saw her, had almost become what it usually was.

The little room under the leads, with its sloping roof and mansard window, was as scrupulously neat and clean as if its tenant had been a holy sister who taught the noble daughters of France at some Convent of the Sacred Heart. There were nasturtiums and mignonette on the outer window-sill, and convolvulus was trained to climb round the window.

As she sat by his side on the narrow white bed, clasping and stroking his painty, turpentiny hand, and kissing it every five minutes, he talked to her like a father—as he told Taffy afterwards—and scolded her

for having been so silly as not to send for him directly, or come to the studio. He said how glad he was, how glad they would all be, that she was going to give up sitting for the figure—not, of course, that there was any real harm in it, but it was better not—and especially how happy it would make them to feel she intended to live straight for the future. Little Billee was to remain at Barbizon for a little while; but she must promise to come and dine with Taffy and himself that very day, and cook the dinner; and when he went back to his picture, 'Les Noces du Toréador'—saying to her as he left, 'à ce soir donc, mille sacrés tonnerres de nong de Dew!'—he left the happiest woman in the whole Latin Quarter behind him: she had confessed and been forgiven.

And with shame and repentance and confession and forgiveness had come a strange new feeling—that of a dawning self-respect.

Hitherto, for Trilby, self-respect had meant little more than the mere cleanliness of her body, in which she had always revelled; alas! it was one of the conditions of her humble calling. It now meant another kind of cleanliness, and she would luxuriate in it for evermore; and the dreadful past—never to be forgotten by her—should be so lived down as in time, perhaps, to be forgotten by others.

The dinner that evening was a memorable one for Trilby. After she had washed up the knives and forks and plates and dishes, and put them by, she sat and sewed. She wouldn't even smoke her cigarette, it reminded her so of things and scenes she now hated. No more cigarettes for Trilby O'Ferrall.

They all talked of Little Billee. She heard about the way he had been brought up, about his mother and sister, the people

he had always lived among. She also heard (and her heart alternately rose and sank as she listened) what his future was likely to be, and how rare his genius was, and how great—if his friends were to be trusted. Fame and fortune would soon be his—such fame and fortune as fall to the lot of very few—unless anything should happen to spoil his promise and mar his prospects in life, and ruin a splendid career; and the rising of the heart was all for him, the sinking for herself. How could she ever hope to be even the friend of such a man? Might she ever hope to be his servant—his faithful, humble servant?

Little Billee spent a month at Barbizon, and when he came back it was with such a brown face that his friends hardly knew him; and he brought with him such studies as made his friends 'sit up.'

The crushing sense of their own hopeless

inferiority was lost in wonder at his work, in love and enthusiasm for the workman.

Their Little Billee, so young and tender, so weak of body, so strong of purpose, so warm of heart, so light of hand, so keen and quick and piercing of brain and eye, was their master, to be stuck on a pedestal and looked up to and bowed down to, to be watched and warded and worshipped for evermore.

When Trilby came in from her work at six, and he shook hands with her and said 'Hullo, Trilby!' her face turned pale to the lips, her under lip quivered, and she gazed down at him (for she was among the tallest of her sex) with such a moist, hungry, wide-eyed look of humble craving adoration that the Laird felt his worst fears were realised; and the look Little Billee sent up in return filled the manly bosom of Taffy with an equal apprehension.

Then they all four went and dined together at le père Trin's, and Trilby went back to her *blanchisserie de fin.*

Next day Little Billee took his work to show Carrel, and Carrel invited him to come and finish his picture 'The Pitcher Goes to the Well' at his own private studio—an unheard-of favour, which the boy accepted with a thrill of proud gratitude and affectionate reverence.

So little was seen for some time of Little Billee at the studio in the Place St. Anatole des Arts, and little of Trilby; a *blanchisseuse de fin* has not many minutes to spare from her irons. But they often met at dinner. And on Sunday mornings Trilby came to repair the Laird's linen and darn his socks and look after his little comforts, as usual, and spend a happy day. And on Sunday afternoons the studio would be as lively as ever, with the fencing and boxing, the

piano-playing and fiddling—all as it used to be.

And week by week the friends noticed a gradual and subtle change in Trilby. She was no longer slangy in French, unless it were now and then by a slip of the tongue, no longer so facetious and droll, and yet she seemed even happier than she had ever seemed before.

Also, she grew thinner, especially in the face, where the bones of her cheeks and jaws began to show themselves, and these bones were constructed on such right principles (as were those of her brow and chin and the bridge of her nose) that the improvement was astonishing, almost inexplicable.

Also, she lost her freckles as the summer waned and she herself went less into the open air. And she let her hair grow, and made of it a small knot at the back of her head, and showed her little flat ears, which

were charming, and just in the right place, very far back and rather high; Little Billee could not have placed them better himself. Also, her mouth, always too large, took on a firmer and sweeter outline, and her big British teeth were so white and regular that even Frenchmen forgave them their British bigness. And a new soft brightness came into her eyes that no one had ever seen there before. They were stars, just twin gray stars —or rather planets just thrown off by some new sun, for the steady mellow light they gave out was not entirely their own.

Favourite types of beauty change with each succeeding generation. These were the days of Buckner's aristocratic Album beauties, with lofty foreheads, oval faces, little aquiline noses, heart-shaped little mouths, soft dimpled chins, drooping shoulders, and long side ringlets that fell over them—the Lady Arabellas and the Lady Clementinas, Musidoras and

Medoras! A type that will perhaps come back to us some day.

May the present scribe be dead!

Trilby's type would be infinitely more admired now than in the fifties. Her photograph would be in the shop-windows. Sir Edward Burne-Jones—if I may make so bold as to say so—would perhaps have marked her for his own, in spite of her almost too exuberant joyousness and irrepressible vitality. Rossetti might have evolved another new formula from her; Sir John Millais another old one of the kind that is always new and never sates nor palls—like Clytie, let us say—ever old and ever new as love itself!

Trilby's type was in singular contrast to the type Gavarni had made so popular in the Latin Quarter at the period we are writing of, so that those who fell so readily under her charm were rather apt to wonder why.

Moreover, she was thought much too tall for her sex, and her day, and her station in life, and especially for the country she lived in. She hardly looked up to a bold gendarme! and a bold gendarme was nearly as tall as a *dragon de la garde*, who was nearly as tall as an average English policeman. Not that she was a giantess, by any means. She was about as tall as Miss Ellen Terry—and that is a charming height, *I* think.

One day Taffy remarked to the Laird: 'Hang it! I'm blest if Trilby isn't the handsomest woman I know! She looks like a grande dame masquerading as a grisette—almost like a joyful saint at times. She's lovely! By Jove! I couldn't stand her hugging me as she does you! There'd be a tragedy—say the slaughter of Little Billee.'

'Ah! Taffy, my boy,' rejoined the Laird, 'when those long sisterly arms are round my neck it isn't *me* she's hugging.'

'And then,' said Taffy, 'what a trump she is! Why, she's as upright and straight and honourable as a man! And what she says to one about one's self is always so pleasant to hear! That's Irish, I suppose. And, what's more, it's always true.'

'Ah, that's Scotch!' said the Laird, and tried to wink at Little Billee, but Little Billee wasn't there.

Even Svengali perceived the strange metamorphosis. 'Ach, Drilpy,' he would say, on a Sunday afternoon, 'how beautiful you are! It drives me mad! I adore you. I like you thinner; you have such beautiful bones! Why do you not answer my letters? What! you do not *read* them? You *burn* them? And yet I—— Donnerwetter! I forgot! The grisettes of the Quartier Latin have not learned how to read or write; they have only learned how to dance the cancan with the dirty little pig-dog monkeys they

call men. Sacrement! *We* will teach the little pig-dog monkeys to dance something else some day, we Germans. We will make music for them to dance to! Boum! boum! Better than the waiter at the Café de la Rotonde, *hein?* And the grisettes of the Quartier Latin shall pour us out your little white wine—*fotre betit fin planc*, as your pig-dog monkey of a poet says, your rotten *verfluchter* De Musset, "who has got such a splendid future behind him!" Bah! What do *you* know of Monsieur Alfred de Musset? We have got a poet too, my Drilpy. His name is Heinrich Heine. If he's still alive, he lives in Paris, in a little street off the Champs Élysées. He lies in bed all day long, and only sees out of one eye, like the Countess Hahn-Hahn, ha! ha! He adores French grisettes. He married one. Her name is Mathilde, and she has got *süssen füssen*, like you. He would adore you too,

for your beautiful bones; he would like to count them one by one, for he is very playful, like me. And, ach! what a beautiful skeleton you will make! And very soon, too, because you do not smile on your madly-loving Svengali. You burn his letters without reading them! You shall have a nice little mahogany glass case all to yourself in the museum of the École de Médecine, and Svengali shall come in his new fur-lined coat, smoking his big cigar of the Havana, and push the dirty carabins out of the way, and look through the holes of your eyes into your stupid empty skull, and up the nostrils of your high, bony sounding-board of a nose without either a tip or a lip to it, and into the roof of your big mouth, with your thirty-two big English teeth, and between your big ribs into your big chest, where the big leather lungs used to be, and say, "Ach! what a pity she had no more music in her than a big

tom-cat!" And then he will look all down your bones to your poor crumbling feet, and say, "Ach! what a fool she was not to answer Svengali's letters!" and the dirty carabins shall——'

'Shut up, you sacred fool, or I'll precious soon spoil *your* skeleton for you.'

Thus the short-tempered Taffy, who had been listening.

Then Svengali, scowling, would play Chopin's funeral march more divinely than ever; and where the pretty soft part comes in, he would whisper to Trilby, 'That is Svengali coming to look at you in your little mahogany glass case!'

And here let me say that these vicious imaginations of Svengali's, which look so tame in English print, sounded much more ghastly in French, pronounced with a Hebrew-German accent, and uttered in his hoarse, rasping, nasal, throaty rook's caw,

his big yellow teeth baring themselves in a mongrel canine snarl, his heavy upper eyelids drooping over his insolent black eyes.

Besides which, as he played the lovely melody he would go through a ghoulish pantomime, as though he were taking stock of the different bones in her skeleton with greedy but discriminating approval. And when he came down to the feet, he was almost droll in the intensity of his terrible realism. But Trilby did not appreciate this exquisite fooling, and felt cold all over.

He seemed to her a dread powerful demon, who, but for Taffy (who alone could hold him in check), oppressed and weighed on her like an incubus—and she dreamed of him oftener than she dreamed of Taffy, the Laird, or even Little Billee!

Thus pleasantly and smoothly, and with-

out much change or adventure, things went on till Christmas-time.

Little Billee seldom spoke of Trilby, or Trilby of him. Work went on every morning at the studio in the Place St. Anatole des Arts, and pictures were begun and finished—little pictures that didn't take long to paint—the Laird's Spanish bull-fighting scenes, in which the bull never appeared, and which he sent to his native Dundee and sold there; Taffy's tragic little dramas of life in the slums of Paris—starvings, drownings—suicides by charcoal and poison—which he sent everywhere, but did not sell.

Little Billee was painting all this time at Carrel's studio—his private one—and seemed preoccupied and happy when they all met at meal-time, and less talkative even than usual.

He had always been the least talkative

of the three; more prone to listen, and no doubt to think the more.

In the afternoon people came and went as usual, and boxed and fenced and did gymnastic feats, and felt Taffy's biceps, which by this time equalled Mr. Sandow's!

Some of these people were very pleasant and remarkable, and have become famous since then in England, France, America—or have died, or married, and come to grief or glory in other ways. It is the Ballad of the Bouillabaisse all over again!

It might be worth while my trying to sketch some of the more noteworthy, now that my story is slowing for a while—like a French train when the engine-driver sees a long curved tunnel in front of him, as I do—and no light at the other end!

My humble attempts at characterisation might be useful as *mémoires pour servir* to

future biographers. Besides, there are other reasons, as the reader will soon discover.

There was Durien, for instance—Trilby's especial French adorer, *pour le bon motif!* a son of the people, a splendid sculptor, a very fine character in every way—so perfect, indeed, that there is less to say about him than any of the others—modest, earnest, simple, frugal, chaste, and of untiring industry; living for his art, and perhaps also a little for Trilby, whom he would have been only too glad to marry. He was Pygmalion; she was his Galatea—a Galatea whose marble heart would never beat for *him!*

Durien's house is now the finest in the Parc Monceau; his wife and daughters are the best-dressed women in Paris, and he one of the happiest of men; but he will never quite forget poor Galatea:

'La belle aux pieds d'albâtre—aux deux talons de rose!'

Then there was Vincent, a Yankee medical student, who could both work and play.

He is now one of the greatest oculists in the world, and Europeans cross the Atlantic to consult him. He can still play, and when he crosses the Atlantic himself for that purpose he has to travel incognito like a royalty, lest his play should be marred by work. And his daughters are so beautiful and accomplished that British dukes have sighed after them in vain. Indeed, these fair young ladies spend their autumn holiday in refusing the British aristocracy. We are told so in the society papers, and I can quite believe it. Love is not always blind; and if he is, Vincent is the man to cure him.

In those days he prescribed for us all round, and punched and stethoscoped us, and looked at our tongues for love, and told us what to eat, drink, and avoid, and even where to go for it.

For instance: late one night Little Billee woke up in a cold sweat, and thought himself a dying man—he had felt seedy all day and taken no food; so he dressed and dragged himself to Vincent's hotel, and woke him up, and said, 'Oh, Vincent, Vincent! I'm a dying man!' and all but fainted on his bed. Vincent felt him all over with the greatest care, and asked him many questions. Then, looking at his watch, he delivered himself thus: 'Humph! 3.30! rather late—but still—look here, Little Billee—do you know the Halle, on the other side of the water, where they sell vegetables?'

'Oh yes! yes! What vegetable shall I——'

'Listen! On the north side are two restaurants—Bordier and Baratte. They remain open all night. Now go straight off to one of those tuck shops, and tuck in as big a supper as you possibly can. Some

people prefer Baratte. I prefer Bordier myself. Perhaps you'd better try Bordier first and Baratte after. At all events, lose no time; so off you go!'

Thus he saved Little Billee from an early grave.

Then there was the Greek, a boy of only sixteen, but six feet high, and looking ten years older than he was, and able to smoke even stronger tobacco than Taffy himself, and colour pipes divinely; he was a great favourite in the Place St. Anatole, for his *bonhommie*, his niceness, his warm geniality. He was the capitalist of this select circle (and nobly lavish of his capital). He went by the name of Poluphloisboiospaleapologos Petrilopetrolicoconose — for so he was christened by the Laird—because his real name was thought much too long; and much too lovely for the Quartier Latin, and re-

minded one too much of the Isles of Greece —where burning Sappho loved and sang.

What was he learning in the Latin Quarter? French? He spoke French like a native! Nobody knows. But when his Paris friends transferred their Bohemia to London, where were they ever made happier and more at home than in his lordly parental abode—or fed with nicer things?

That abode is now his, and lordlier than ever, as becomes the dwelling of a millionaire and city magnate; and its gray-bearded owner is as genial, as jolly, and as hospitable as in the old Paris days, but he no longer colours pipes.

Then there was Carnegie, fresh from Balliol, redolent of the 'varsity. He intended himself then for the diplomatic service, and came to Paris to learn French as it is spoke; and spent most of his time

with his fashionable English friends on the right side of the river, and the rest with Taffy, the Laird, and Little Billee on the left. Perhaps that is why he has not become an ambassador. He is now only a rural dean, and speaks the worst French I know, and speaks it wherever and whenever he can.

It serves him right, I think.

He was fond of lords, and knew some (at least, he gave one that impression), and often talked of them, and dressed so beautifully that even Little Billee was abashed in his presence. Only Taffy, in his threadbare, out-at-elbow shooting-jacket and cricket-cap, and the Laird, in his tattered straw hat and Taffy's old overcoat down to his heels, dared to walk arm-in-arm with him—nay, insisted on doing so—as they listened to the band in the Luxembourg Gardens.

And his whiskers were even longer and

thicker and more golden than Taffy's own. But the mere sight of a boxing-glove made him sick.

Then there was the yellow-haired Antony, a Swiss — the idle apprentice, *le roi des truands*, as we called him—to whom everything was forgiven, as to François Villon, *à cause de ses gentillesses*—surely, for all his reprehensible pranks, the gentlest and most lovable creature that ever lived in Bohemia, or out of it.

Always in debt, like Svengali, for he had no more notion of the value of money than a humming-bird, and gave away in reckless generosity to friends what in strictness belonged to his endless creditors; like Svengali, humorous, witty, and a most exquisite and original artist, and also somewhat eccentric in his attire (though scrupulously clean), so that people would stare at him as

he walked along—a thing that always gave him dire offence! But, unlike Svengali, full of delicacy, refinement, and distinction of mind and manner, void of any self-conceit; and, in spite of the irregularities of his life, the very soul of truth and honour, as gentle as he was chivalrous and brave; the warmest, staunchest, sincerest, most unselfish friend in the world; and, as long as his purse was full, the best and drollest boon companion in the world—but that was not for ever!

When the money was gone, then would Antony hie him to some beggarly attic in some lost Parisian slum, and write his own epitaph in lovely French or German verse—or even English (for he was an astounding linguist); and telling himself that he was forsaken by family, friends, and mistress alike, look out of his casement over the Paris chimney-pots for the last time, and listen

once more to 'the harmonies of nature,' as he called it, and 'aspire towards the infinite,' and bewail 'the cruel deceptions of his life,' and finally lay himself down to die of sheer starvation.

And as he lay and waited for his release, that was so long in coming, he would beguile the weary hours by mumbling a crust 'watered with his own salt tears,' and decorating his epitaph with fanciful designs of the most exquisite humour, pathos, and beauty; these early illustrated epitaphs of the young Antony, of which there still exist a goodly number, are now priceless, as all collectors know all over the world.

Fainter and fainter would he grow, and finally, on the third day or thereabouts, a remittance would reach him from some long-suffering sister or aunt in far Lausanne; or else the fickle mistress or faithless friend (who had been looking for him all

over Paris) would discover his hiding-place, the beautiful epitaph would be walked off in triumph to le père Marcas in the Rue du Ghette and sold for twenty, fifty, a hundred francs; and then *vogue la galère!* and back again to Bohemia, dear Bohemia and all its joys, as long as the money lasted . . . *e poi, da capo!*

And now that his name is a household word in two hemispheres, and he himself an honour and a glory to the land he has adopted as his own, he loves to remember all this, and look back from the lofty pinnacle on which he sits perched up aloft to the impecunious days of his idle apprenticeship—*le bon temps où l'on était si malheureux!*

And with all that Quixotic dignity of his, so famous is he as a wit that when he jokes (and he is always joking), people laugh first, and then ask what he was joking about, and

you can even make your own mild funniments raise a roar by merely prefacing them 'as Antony once said!'

The present scribe has often done so. And if by a happy fluke you should some day hit upon a really good thing of your own—good enough to be quoted—be sure it will come back to you after many days prefaced 'as Antony once said!'

And these jokes are so good-natured that you almost resent their being made at anybody's expense but your own! Never from Antony:

> 'The aimless jest that striking has caused pain,
> The idle word that he'd wish back again!'

Indeed, in spite of his success, I don't suppose he ever made an enemy in his life.

And here let me add (lest there be any doubt as to his identity) that he is now tall and stout and strikingly handsome, though

rather bald; and such an aristocrat in bearing, aspect, and manner, that you would take him for a blue-blooded descendant of the Crusaders instead of the son of a respectable burgher in Lausanne.

Then there was Lorrimer, the industrious apprentice, who is now also well pinnacled on high; himself a pillar of the Royal Academy—probably, if he lives long enough, its future president—the duly knighted or baroneted Lord Mayor of 'all the plastic arts' (except one or two perhaps, here and there, that are not altogether without some importance).

May this not be for many, many years! Lorrimer himself would be the first to say so!

Tall, thin, red-haired, and well-favoured, he was a most eager, earnest, and painstaking young enthusiast, of precocious culture, who read improving books, and did

not share in the amusements of the Quartier Latin, but spent his evenings at home with Handel, Michael Angelo, and Dante, on the respectable side of the river. Also, he went into good society sometimes, with a dress-coat on, and a white tie, and his hair parted in the middle!

But in spite of these blemishes on his otherwise exemplary record as an art student, he was the most delightful companion—the most affectionate, helpful, and sympathetic of friends. May he live long and prosper!

Enthusiast as he was, he could only worship one god at a time. It was either Michael Angelo, Phidias, Paul Veronese, Tintoret, Raphael, or Titian — never a modern — moderns didn't exist! And so thoroughgoing was he in his worship, and so persistent in voicing it, that he made those immortals quite unpopular in the Place

St. Anatole des Arts. We grew to dread their very names. Each of them would last him a couple of months or so; then he would give us a month's holiday, and take up another.

Antony did not think much of Lorrimer in those days, nor Lorrimer of him, for all they were such good friends. And neither of them thought much of Little Billee, whose pinnacle (of pure unadulterated fame) is now the highest of all—the highest probably that can be for a mere painter of pictures!

And what is so nice about Lorrimer, now that he is a graybeard, an Academician, an accomplished man of the world and society, is that he admires Antony's genius more than he can say—and reads Mr. Rudyard Kipling's delightful stories as well as Dante's *Inferno*—and can listen with delight to the lovely songs of Signor Tosti, who has not

precisely founded himself on Handel—can even scream with laughter at a comic song—even a nigger melody—so, at least, that it but be sung in well-bred and distinguished company—for Lorrimer is no Bohemian.

'Shoo, fly! don'tcher bother me!
For I belong to the Comp'ny G!'

Both these famous men are happily (and most beautifully) married—grandfathers, for all I know—and 'move in the very best society' (Lorrimer always, I'm told; Antony now and then); *la haute*, as it used to be called in French Bohemia—meaning dukes and lords and even royalties, I suppose, and those who love them, and whom they love!

That *is* the best society, isn't it? At all events, we are assured it used to be; but that must have been before the present scribe (a meek and somewhat innocent out-

sider) had been privileged to see it with his own little eye.

And when they happen to meet there (Antony and Lorrimer, I mean), I don't expect they rush very wildly into each other's arms, or talk very fluently about old times. Nor do I suppose their wives are very intimate. None of our wives are. Not even Taffy's and the Laird's.

Oh, Orestes! Oh, Pylades!

Oh, ye impecunious, unpinnacled young inseparables of eighteen, nineteen, twenty, even twenty-five, who share each other's thoughts and purses, and wear each other's clothes, and swear each other's oaths, and smoke each other's pipes, and respect each other's lights o' love, and keep each other's secrets, and tell each other's jokes, and pawn each other's watches and merrymake together on the proceeds, and sit all night by each other's bedsides in sickness, and

comfort each other in sorrow and disappointment with silent, manly sympathy—'wait till you get to forty year!'

Wait even till each or either of you gets himself a little pinnacle of his own—be it ever so humble!

Nay, wait till either or each of you gets himself a wife!

History goes on repeating itself, and so do novels, and this is a platitude, and there's nothing new under the sun.

May too cecee (as the idiomatic Laird would say, in the language he adores)—may too cecee ay nee eecee nee lâh!

Then there was Dodor, the handsome young *dragon de la garde* — a full private, if you please, with a beardless face, and damask-rosy cheeks, and a small waist, and narrow feet like a lady's, and who, strange to say, spoke English just like an Englishman.

And his friend Gontran, *alias* l'Zouzou—a corporal in the Zouaves.

Both of these worthies had met Taffy in the Crimea, and frequented the studios in the Quartier Latin, where they adored (and were adored by) the grisettes and models, especially Trilby.

Both of them were distinguished for being the worst subjects (*les plus mauvais garnements*) of their respective regiments ; yet both were special favourites not only with their fellow-rankers, but with those in command, from their colonels downward.

Both were in the habit of being promoted to the rank of corporal or brigadier, and degraded to the rank of private next day for general misconduct, the result of a too exuberant delight in their promotion.

Neither of them knew fear, envy, malice, temper, or low spirits ; ever said or did an ill-natured thing ; ever even thought one ;

ever had an enemy but himself. Both had the best or the worst manners going, according to their company, whose manners they reflected; they were true chameleons!

Both were always ready to share their last ten-sou piece (not that they ever seemed to have one) with each other or anybody else, or anybody else's last ten-sou piece with you; to offer you a friend's cigar; to invite you to dine with any friend they had; to fight with you, or for you, at a moment's notice. And they made up for all the anxiety, tribulation, and sorrow they caused at home by the endless fun and amusement they gave to all outside.

It was a pretty dance they led; but our three friends of the Place St. Anatole (who hadn't got to pay the pipers) loved them both, especially Dodor.

One fine Sunday afternoon Little Billee found himself studying life and character in

that most delightful and festive scene la Fête de St. Cloud, and met Dodor and l'Zouzou there, who hailed him with delight, saying:

'Nous allons joliment jubiler, nom d'une pipe!' and insisted on his joining in their amusements and paying for them — round-abouts, swings, the giant, the dwarf, the strong man, the fat woman—to whom they made love and were taken too seriously, and turned out — the menagerie of wild beasts, whom they teased and aggravated till the police had to interfere. Also *al fresco* dances, where their cancan step was of the wildest and most unbridled character, till a *sous-officier* or a gendarme came in sight, and then they danced quite mincingly and demurely, *en maître d'école*, as they called it, to the huge delight of an immense and ever-increasing crowd, and the disgust of all truly respectable men.

They also insisted on Little Billee's walking between them, arm-in-arm, and talking to them in English whenever they saw coming towards them a respectable English family with daughters. It was the dragoon's delight to get himself stared at by fair daughters of Albion for speaking as good English as themselves—a rare accomplishment in a French trooper—and Zouzou's happiness to be thought English too, though the only English he knew was the phrase, 'I will not! I will not!' which he had picked up in the Crimea, and repeated over and over again when he came within ear-shot of a pretty English girl.

Little Billee was not happy in these circumstances. He was no snob. But he was a respectably-brought-up young Briton of the higher middle class, and it was not quite pleasant for him to be seen (by fair countrywomen of his own) walking arm-in-arm on a

Sunday afternoon with a couple of French private soldiers, and uncommonly rowdy ones at that.

Later, they came back to Paris together on the top of an omnibus, among a very proletarian crowd; and there the two facetious warriors immediately made themselves pleasant all round and became very popular, especially with the women and children; but not, I regret to say, through the propriety, refinement, and discretion of their behaviour. Little Billee resolved that he would not go a-pleasuring with them any more.

However, they stuck to him through thick and thin, and insisted on escorting him all the way back to the Quartier Latin, by the Pont de la Concorde and the Rue de Lille in the Faubourg St. Germain.

Little Billee loved the Faubourg St. Germain, especially the Rue de Lille. He was fond of gazing at the magnificent old

mansions, the *hôtels* of the old French noblesse, or rather the outside walls thereof, the grand sculptured portals with the armorial bearings and the splendid old historic names above them — Hôtel de This, Hôtel de That, Rohan-Chabot, Montmorency, La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, La Tour d'Auvergne.

He would forget himself in romantic dreams of past and forgotten French chivalry which these glorious names called up; for he knew a little of French history, loving to read Froissart and Saint-Simon and the genial Brantôme.

Halting opposite one of the finest and oldest of all these gateways, his especial favourite, labelled 'Hôtel de la Rochemartel' in letters of faded gold over a ducal coronet and a huge escutcheon of stone, he began to descant upon its architectural beauties and noble proportions to l'Zouzou.

'*Parbleu!*' said l'Zouzou, '*connu, farceur!* why, I was *born* there, on the 6th of March 1834, at 5.30 in the morning. Lucky day for France—*hein?*'

'Born there? what do you mean — in the porter's lodge?'

At this juncture the two great gates rolled back, a liveried *Suisse* appeared, and an open carriage and pair came out, and in it were two elderly ladies and a younger one.

To Little Billee's indignation, the two incorrigible warriors made the military salute, and the three ladies bowed stiffly and gravely.

And then (to Little Billee's horror this time) one of them happened to look back, and Zouzou actually kissed his hand to her.

'Do you *know* that lady?' asked Little Billee, very sternly.

'*Parbleu! si je la connais!* Why, it's

my mother! Isn't she nice? She's rather cross with me just now.'

'Your *mother!* Why, what do you mean? What on earth would your mother be doing in that big carriage and at that big house?'

'*Parbleu, farceur!* She lives there!'

'*Lives* there? Why, who and what is she, your mother?'

'The Duchesse de la Rochemartel, *parbleu!* and that's my sister; and that's my aunt, Princesse de Chevagné-Bauffremont! She's the "*patronne*" of that *chic* equipage. She's a millionaire, my aunt Chevagné!'

'Well, I never! What's *your* name, then?'

'Oh, *my* name! Hang it—let me see! Well—Gontran—Xavier—François—Marie—Joseph d'Amaury de Brissac de Roncesvaulx de la Rochemartel-Boisségur, at your service!'

'Quite correct!' said Dodor; '*l'enfant dit vrai!*'

'Well — I — never! And what's *your* name, Dodor?'

'Oh! I'm only a humble individual, and answer to the one-horse name of Théodore Rigolot de Lafarce. But Zouzou's an awful swell, you know—his brother's the Duke!'

Little Billee was no snob. But he was a respectably-brought-up young Briton of the higher middle class, and these revelations, which he could not but believe, astounded him so that he could hardly speak. Much as he flattered himself that he scorned the bloated aristocracy, titles are titles — even French titles!—and when it comes to dukes and princesses who live in houses like the Hôtel de la Rochemartel . . . !

It's enough to take a respectably-brought-up young Briton's breath away!

When he saw Taffy that evening, he

exclaimed: 'I say, Zouzou's mother's a duchess!'

'Yes—the Duchesse de la Rochemartel-Boisségur.'

'You never told me!'

'You never asked me. It's one of the greatest names in France. They're very poor, I believe.'

'Poor! You should see the house they live in!'

'I've been there, to dinner; and the dinner wasn't very good. They let a great part of it, and live mostly in the country. The Duke is Zouzou's brother; very unlike Zouzou; he's consumptive and unmarried, and the most respectable man in Paris. Zouzou will be the Duke some day.'

'And Dodor — he's a swell, too, I suppose — he says he's *de* something or other!'

'Yes — Rigolot de Lafarce. I've no doubt he descends from the Crusaders too; the name seems to favour it, anyhow; and such lots of them do in this country. His mother was English, and bore the worthy name of Brown. He was at school in England; that's why he speaks English so well—and behaves so badly, perhaps! He's got a very beautiful sister, married to a man in the 60th Rifles—Jack Reeve, a son of Lord Reevely's; a selfish sort of chap. I don't suppose he gets on very well with his brother-in-law. Poor Dodor! His sister's about the only living thing he cares for—except Zouzou.'

I wonder if the bland and genial Monsieur Théodore — 'notre Sieur Théodore' — now junior partner in the great haberdashery firm of 'Passefil et Rigolot,' on the Boulevard des Capucines, and a pillar of the English

chapel in the Rue Marbœuf, is very hard on his employés and employées if they are a little late at their counters on a Monday morning?

I wonder if that stuck-up, stingy, stodgy, communard-shooting, church-going, time-serving, place-hunting, pious-eyed, pompous old prig, martinet, and philistine, Monsieur le Maréchal-Duc de la Rochemartel-Boisségur, ever tells Madame la Maréchale-Duchesse (*née* Hunks, of Chicago) how once upon a time Dodor and he—

We will tell no tales out of school.

The present scribe is no snob. He is a respectably-brought-up old Briton of the higher middle class — at least, he flatters himself so. And he writes for just such old philistines as himself, who date from a time when titles were not thought so cheap as to-day. Alas! all reverence for all that is high and time-honoured and beautiful seems at a discount.

So he has kept his blackguard ducal Zouave for the bouquet of this little show —the final *bonne bouche* in his Bohemian *menu*—that he may make it palatable to those who only look upon the good old Quartier Latin (now no more to speak of) as a very low, common, vulgar quarter indeed, deservedly swept away, where misters the students (shocking bounders and cads) had nothing better to do, day and night, than mount up to a horrid place called the thatched house—*la chaumière*—

'Pour y danser le cancan
Ou le Robert Macaire—
Toujours—toujours—toujours—
La nuit comme le jour . . .
Et youp ! youp ! youp !
Tra la la la la . . . la la la !'

. . . . .

Christmas was drawing near.

There were days when the whole Quartier Latin would veil its iniquities under fogs

almost worthy of the Thames Valley between London Bridge and Westminster, and out of the studio window the prospect was a dreary blank. No Morgue! no towers of Notre Dame! not even the chimney-pots over the way — not even the little mediæval toy turret at the corner of the Rue Vieille des Trois Mauvais Ladres, Little Billee's delight!

The stove had to be crammed till its sides grew a dull deep red before one's fingers could hold a brush or squeeze a bladder; one had to box or fence at nine in the morning, that one might recover from the cold bath, and get warm for the rest of the day!

Taffy and the Laird grew pensive and dreamy, childlike and bland; and when they talked it was generally about Christmas at home in Merry England and the distant Land of Cakes, and how good it was to be there at

such a time—hunting, shooting, curling, and endless carouse!

It was Ho! for the jolly West Riding, and Hey! for the bonnets of Bonnie Dundee, till they grew quite homesick, and wanted to start by the very next train.

They didn't do anything so foolish. They wrote over to friends in London for the biggest turkey, the biggest plum-pudding, that could be got for love or money, with mince-pies, and holly and mistletoe, and sturdy, short, thick English sausages; half a Stilton cheese, and a sirloin of beef —two sirloins, in case one should not be enough.

For they meant to have a Homeric feast in the studio on Christmas Day—Taffy, the Laird, and Little Billee—and invite all the delightful chums I have been trying to describe; and that is just why I tried to describe them—Durien, Vincent, Antony,

Lorrimer, Carnegie, Petrolicoconose, l'Zouzou, and Dodor!

The cooking and waiting should be done by Trilby, her friend Angèle Boisse, M. et Mme. Vinard, and such little Vinards as could be trusted with glass and crockery and mince-pies; and if that was not enough, they would also cook themselves, and wait upon each other.

When dinner should be over, supper was to follow with scarcely any interval to speak of; and to partake of this other guests should be bidden—Svengali and Gecko, and perhaps one or two more. No ladies!

For, as the unsusceptible Laird expressed it, in the language of a gillie he had once met at a servants' dance in a Highland country-house, 'Them wimmen spiles the ball!'

Elaborate cards of invitation were sent out, in the designing and ornamentation of

which the Laird and Taffy exhausted all their fancy (Little Billee had no time).

Wines and spirits and English beers were procured at great cost from M. E. Delevingne's, in the Rue St. Honoré, and liqueurs of every description—chartreuse, curaçoa, *ratafia de cassis*, and anisette; no expense was spared.

Also, truffled galantines of turkey, tongues, hams, *rillettes de Tours*, *pâtés de foie gras*, *fromage d'Italie* (which has nothing to do with cheese), *saucissons d'Arles et de Lyon*, with and without garlic, cold jellies peppery and salt—everything that French *charcutiers* and their wives can make out of French pigs, or any other animal whatever, beast, bird, or fowl (even cats and rats), for the supper; and sweet jellies, and cakes, and sweetmeats, and confections of all kinds, from the famous pastry-cook at the corner of the Rue Castiglione.

Mouths went watering all day long in

joyful anticipation. They water somewhat sadly now at the mere remembrance of these delicious things—the mere immediate sight or scent of which in these degenerate latter days would no longer avail to promote any such delectable secretion. *Hélas! ahimè! ach weh! ay de mi! eheu!* οἴμοι—in point of fact, *alas!*

That is the very exclamation I wanted.

Christmas Eve came round. The pieces of resistance and plum-pudding and mince-pies had not yet arrived from London—but there was plenty of time.

Les trois Angliches dined at le père Trin's, as usual, and played billiards and dominoes at the Café du Luxembourg, and possessed their souls in patience till it was time to go and hear the midnight mass at the Madeleine, where Roucouly, the great barytone of the Opéra Comique, was retained to sing Adam's famous Noël.

The whole Quartier seemed alive with the *réveillon.* It was a clear, frosty night, with a splendid moon just past the full, and most exhilarating was the walk along the quays on the Rive Gauche, over the Pont de la Concorde and across the Place thereof, and up the thronged Rue de la Madeleine to the massive Parthenaic place of worship that always has such a pagan, worldly look of smug and prosperous modernity.

They struggled manfully, and found standing and kneeling room among that fervent crowd, and heard the impressive service with mixed feelings, as became true Britons of very advanced liberal and religious opinions; not with the unmixed contempt of the proper British Orthodox (who were there in full force, one may be sure).

But their susceptible hearts soon melted at the beautiful music, and in mere sen-

suous *attendrissement* they were quickly in unison with all the rest.

For as the clock struck twelve out pealed the organ, and up rose the finest voice in France:

> 'Minuit, Chrétiens! c'est l'heure solennelle
> Où l'Homme-Dieu descendit parmi nous!'

And a wave of religious emotion rolled over Little Billee and submerged him; swept him off his little legs, swept him out of his little self, drowned him in a great seething surge of love—love of his kind, love of love, love of life, love of death, love of all that is and ever was and ever will be—a very large order indeed, even for Little Billee.

And it seemed to him that he stretched out his arms for love to one figure especially beloved beyond all the rest—one figure erect on high with arms outstretched to him, in more than common fellowship of need; not the sorrowful figure crowned with thorns,

for it was in the likeness of a woman; but never that of the Virgin Mother of Our Lord.

It was Trilby, Trilby, Trilby! a poor fallen sinner and waif all but lost amid the scum of the most corrupt city on earth. Trilby weak and mortal like himself, and in woful want of pardon! and in her gray dove-like eyes he saw the shining of so great a love that he was abashed; for well he knew that all that love was his, and would be his for ever, come what would or could.

'Peuple, debout! Chante ta délivrance!
Noël! Noël! Voici le Rédempteur!'

So sang and rang and pealed and echoed the big, deep, metallic barytone bass—above the organ, above the incense, above everything else in the world—till the very universe seemed to shake with the rolling thunder of that great message of love and forgiveness!

Thus at least felt Little Billee, whose way

it was to magnify and exaggerate all things under the subtle stimulus of sound, and the singing human voice had especially strange power to penetrate into his inmost depths—even the voice of man!

And what voice but the deepest and gravest and grandest there is can give worthy utterance to such a message as that, the epitome, the abstract, the very essence of all collective humanity's wisdom at its best!

Little Billee reached the Hôtel Corneille that night in a very exalted frame of mind indeed; the loftiest, lowliest mood of all.

Now see what sport we are of trivial, base, ignoble earthly things!

Sitting on the doorstep, and smoking two cigars at once he found Ribot, one of his fellow-lodgers, whose room was just under his own. Ribot was so tipsy that he could not ring. But he could still sing, and did so at the top of his voice. It was not the Noël

of Adam that he sang. He had not spent his *réveillon* in any church.

With the help of a sleepy waiter, Little Billee got the bacchanalian into his room and lit his candle for him, and, disengaging himself from his maudlin embraces, left him to wallow in solitude.

As he lay awake in his bed, trying to recall the deep and high emotions of the evening, he heard the tipsy hog below tumbling about his room and still trying to sing his senseless ditty :

'Allons, Glycère !
Rougis mon verre
Du jus divin dont mon cœur est toujours jaloux . . .
Et puis à table,
Bacchante aimable !
Enivrons-nous (hic) Les g-glougloux sont des rendez-vous !' . . .

Then the song ceased for a while, and soon there were other sounds, as on a Channel steamer. Glougloux indeed!

Then the fear arose in Little Billee's

mind lest the drunken beast should set fire to his bedroom curtains. All heavenly visions were chased away for the night. . . .

Our hero, half crazed with fear, disgust, and irritation, lay wide awake, his nostrils on the watch for the smell of burning chintz or muslin, and wondered how an educated man —for Ribot was a law-student—could ever make such a filthy beast of himself as that! It was a scandal—a disgrace; it was not to be borne; there should be no forgiveness for such as Ribot—not even on Christmas Day! He would complain to Madame Paul, the *patronne;* he would have Ribot turned out into the street; he would leave the hotel himself the very next morning! At last he fell asleep, thinking of all he would do; and thus, ridiculously and ignominiously for Little Billee, ended the *réveillon.*

Next morning he complained to Madame Paul; and though he did not give her

warning, nor even insist on the expulsion of Ribot (who, as he heard with a hard heart, was *bien malade ce matin*), he expressed himself very severely on the conduct of that gentleman, and on the dangers from fire that might arise from a tipsy man being trusted alone in a small bedroom with chintz curtains and a lighted candle. If it hadn't been for himself, he told her, Ribot would have slept on the doorstep, and serve him right! He was really grand in his virtuous indignation, in spite of his imperfect French; and Madame Paul was deeply contrite for her peccant lodger, and profuse in her apologies; and Little Billee began his twenty-first Christmas Day like a Pharisee, thanking his star that he was not as Ribot!

END OF VOL. I

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